A HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

PRINCIPALLY INTENDED

FOR

The Inhabitants of India.

BY

HENRY MORRIS,

M. C. S.

"Fais ce que tu dois, advienne que pourra."
Do thy duty, come what may.

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HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

BRITAIN UNDER THE ROMANS, THE SAXON CONQUEST, AND THE HEPTARCHY.

FROM B. C. 55 TO A. D. 827.

The ancient Britons—Their religion—The Druids—Julius Cæsar's first invasion—His second invasion—Invasion under Claudius—Caractacus—Suetonius—The conquest of Mona—The revolt under Boadicea—Bitter nature of the war—Agricola—The subjugation of Britain—Britain as a Roman colony—The introduction of Christianity—The Romans quit the island—Incursions of the Picts and Scots—The Saxons—They are invited to assist the Britons—Their treachery—War between the Britons and Saxons—The Saxon Conquest—The Heptarchy—Triumph of Egbert, King of the West Saxons—Propagation of the Gospel among the Saxons—St. Augustine and his companions.

THE state of Britain at the earliest period, of which we have any historical notice, was very different from what it is now. It was then a wild country, inhabited by various savage tribes. These tribes were, most probably, descended from

CHAP. I.

the Gauls, or Celts, who lived in the neighbouring country, which is now called France, and who possessed the same language and the same customs. The inhabitants of the south-eastern portion of the island, which was nearest Gaul, were, in a measure, civilised; or they were, rather, less barbarous than those who lived farther inland. They had learned to clothe themselves properly, to raise houses, and to cultivate the ground: while the others abode in dens and caves, dressed themselves in the skins of wild beasts, stained their persons with various dyes, and led a very wild and degraded life.

Government of the ancient Britons.

The government under which the Britons lived was rude and barbarous. Each tribe was nominally under the rule of an independent chief: but the people were under no strict control, and were influenced more by the directions of their priests, than by the commands of their leaders. They were constantly at war with each other, and shewed equal courage and cruelty in their savage battles.

Their religion.

Their religion was very foul and wicked, for it was disfigured by human sacrifices, and other cruel rites. Upon grand occasions, a number of men were placed within huge figures of wicker-work, in which they were burnt alive in honour of the British gods. Criminals and prisoners taken in war were usually selected for this purpose.

The Druids.

The priests of this creed were called Druids. They had great power and authority, and they

were, in the highest degree, feared and reverenced by the people. The only learned men in the island were to be found among them; they were the instructors of the young; they were free from every kind of taxation; they administered a sort of rude justice after their own rules of right and wrong; they bestowed rewards in cases of meritorious conduct; and they had the power of cutting off from the society of men all, who disputed their decisions, or opposed their will. They lived in the dark places of the numerous forests, which covered the face of the land, and there performed their secret and mysterious rites. They did not commit their knowledge to writing. We are not, therefore, fully acquainted with the nature of their religion: but we know that they had a peculiar reverence for the oak, and for a plant, called mistletoe, which usually grows upon the branches of that tree.

Cæsar's first invasion of Britain.

In the year 55 before the birth of the Saviour, Julius Cæsar, the famous Roman General, who had led his soldiers to victory in Gaul, invaded Britain. The Britons bravely opposed his landing, but were defeated by the courage, skill, and discipline of the Romans; and they readily agreed to give hostages to the conqueror upon his proposing to withdraw his troops.

His second invasion.

Cæsar passed the following winter in Gaul: but, as the Britons, upon his return thither, failed to fulfil the engagements that they had made, he

CHAP. I.

B. C. 56.

came back to Britain the next year; put to flight the wild, and ill-trained forces, which had assembled under a chief named Cassibelaunus; crossed the river Thames; burnt Verulam, the British leader's capital; and retired a second time, leaving the Roman conquest of Britain more a name than a reality.

Invasion of Britain under Claudius.

For about a hundred years, no further attempt was made by Rome upon the liberty of Britain: but the thoughts of triumphs in that distant country still occupied the minds of her ambitious people. At length, in the year A. D. 43, the Emperor Claudius sent an army thither under Aulus Plautius; and afterwards visited the land himself. The inhabitants of the south-eastern part of the island readily submitted to him: but the other Britons, under a brave leader, named Caractacus, maintained a stubborn contest against the Roman legions for many years. At length, however, Caractacus was betrayed into the hands of the Romans. He was sent to Rome, where, by his manly bearing in captivity, he won the hearts of his conquerors, who treated him with unusual gentleness and kindness.

War between the Romans and Britons.

The conflict in Britain still continued, and the warlike youth of Rome hastened thither to gain renown in arms. The Britons were yet unconquered, and they were urged to prolong their resistance by the prayers and encouragements of their priests. In the reign of the Emperor Nero,

CHAP. I.
A.D. 61.

Suetonius Paulinus, the Roman commander-in-chief, formed the plan of attacking Mona, an island close to the western coast of Britain, where were the principal temples of the Druids, and their favourite abodes. The Britons, being cheered by the presence and the prayers of their priests, and by the exhortations of their women, who went from rank to rank exciting the men to courage, fought with determined perseverance: but they were overcome by Roman discipline and skill. Their army was routed; their sacred places defiled; and numbers of the Druids were slain in the very fires which they had raised to consume their enemies.

Boadicea.

But during the absence of Suetonius, Boadicea, the brave queen of the Iceni, a tribe in the southern part of Britain, had collected around her a chosen band of warriors. She had been grossly insulted by the Roman governor, and had been driven to seek revenge for her wrongs. Suetonius rapidly returned to the south, with the object of saving London, then a large Roman settlement, and of meeting his new opponent. He was, however, unable to protect that town, which the Britons destroyed, after putting every one of its inhabitants to the sword.

Savage character of the war.

The war became intensely savage and bitter. The Britons were driven wild by the cruelties of the Romans, and the Romans were enraged at the fury of their foes. Boadicea was defeated in a

CHAP. I.

A. D. 61.

battle, in which 80,000 of her followers are said to have been slain, and put an end to her life by poison in order to save herself from falling into the hands of her enemies. The Emperor of Rome soon afterwards thought it proper to recall the remorseless Suetonius, and the savage horrors of the war were stilled.

The administration of Agricola.

A few years later, the Britons were entirely conquered by Julius Agricola, who was a skilful commander and a polished gentleman. He was successful in the arts both of peace and war. He brought the people completely under the authority of Rome, and won their hearts to himself. After he had restored peace to Britain, and driven those still in arms to seek refuge among the hills of Scotland, he built a line of forts between the friths of Forth and Clyde, and erected, for defence, in different parts of the land, stone walls, which his successors, from time to time, improved and strengthened.

Britain as a Roman colony.

Thus the Roman power triumphed over Britain. For the next three hundred years, she was a quiet and peaceable Roman colony, and the sound of war was rarely heard, except in the northern portion of the island.

With Roman conquest came Roman civilisation. The people mixed freely with the refined invaders, copied their manners, and adopted the customs of their daily life. Roman arts abounded

CHAP. I.

A. D. 420.

in the land; Roman laws prevailed; and the Roman tongue was spoken. And, in those early times, the blessings of the Christian religion were brought into Britain. Men, who had sat at the feet of Paul, the Apostle, raised there the standard of the Cross; made known the story of redeeming love; and caused the Saviour's name to be reverenced by many faithful hearts.

Departure of the Romans from Britain.

Time passed away. Troubles came upon the Roman empire; and her soldiers, being needed for defence in their own land, were recalled from Britain. But, during the stay of the Romans, the valour of the Britons had declined, and most of the young men had been taken by their conquerors to fight the battles of the empire in foreign lands. When, therefore, the Picts and Scots, tribes from the north of the island, passed over the defensive walls, and over-ran the country, soon after the Romans had left it, the Britons had, by themselves, neither the heart nor the power to withstand them. They sent to Rome most urgent entreaties for help. A Roman legion twice returned to its former station, and drove the savage invaders back: but, when a third request for assistance was received, all aid was refused. The Romans had bidden farewell to Britain for ever.

The hearts of the Britons completely failed them. Their country was desolated by the incursions of their barbarian neighbours; they were

CHAP. I. A. D. 449.

unable to repel them; and they turned for help towards another quarter.

The Saxons.

The Saxons, a people from the north of Germany, were, at that time, greatly celebrated for their courage and success in war. They had spread over the greater part of Northern Europe and had, by piracy and rapine, carried terror into the coasts of all the adjacent countries. They were a vigorous, free and hardy people. They were governed by kings, but their monarchs' power was limited; and their princes, judges, and under-leaders were chosen by the multitude. They always elected as chiefs men, who were eminent for war; for they were full of zeal for martial deeds, and even the women accompanied their husbands and brothers to the battle-field.

Their Government.

Their religion.

Their religion was a low, and yet an inspiring one. It consisted in a gross idolatry of dead men, whom in life they regarded as heroes and in death as gods. They looked forward to the enjoyment in the life to come, of a sensual, unholy happiness, expecting to feast in riotous revelry, and to drink their favourite liquor from cups made of the skulls of their foes.

Arrival of the Saxons in Britain.

To this people the Britons looked for aid in their necessity. One of their princes, named Vortigern, sent to Germany to request some of the well-known Saxon soldiers to come over to their assistance. Hengist and Horsa, two warlike brothers, answered the summons; and with a

large company of followers, entered Britain, repulsed the savage Picts and Scots, and, for a time, secured peace and quietness to their allies. But, seeing that the land was good, they resolved to remain in the fair and fertile country, which promised them such pleasant abodes, and was inhabited by such a feeble race. They invited their countrymen to join them, and, when considerably strengthened by reinforcements, they proclaimed themselves the enemies of those whom they had come to succour. War succeeded, and, as might have been expected, the Britons were worsted. Horsa was slain in battle: but his brother, Hengist, still maintained a position in the land, and strove successfully against the Britons. Multitudes of rude, wild men flocked over from the north. They were all of the same race, though they were of different tribes and of different names. There were Angles, Jutes, and Saxons: but, notwithstanding their numbers, they were unable to subdue the Britons for a long time. That people had recovered something of their ancient spirit, and a desperate war ensued, which continued for some time with various success, but with unabated energy. It was at this period that Prince Arthur lived, whose name is still preserved in fables and in song. He was most likely a person of brave and warlike character: but his conquests were neither so numerous nor so grand, as the traditions of the people have represented them.

Warfare between the Britons and Saxons.

Prince Arthur.

CHAP. I.

A. D. 500.

Saxon conquest of Britain.

The power of the Saxons gradually increased, until, after about a hundred and fifty years of turbulence and strife, the greater part of the Britons were driven into the mountains of Wales and Cornwall, or to the countries beyond the sea. Some of them, however, remained in their own land, and became the slaves of the conquerors.

The Heptarchy.

The Saxons were now everywhere masters in Britain. The country was divided into seven kingdoms, each of which was under its own prince: but, although of the same lineage and race, these kings were constantly at warfare with each other; for their warlike spirits had no other foes on whom to turn. The history of the Heptarchy, or the seven governments, is only the relation of these intestine wars, and is, except in a few instances, of little interest or pleasure. The largest kingdoms were Northumbria in the north, Mercia in the centre, and Wessex in the south, of England. East Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex, were smaller than the others, and were situated to the east and south-east of the island.

The Bretwaldas.

During the frequent conflicts which took place, some of the most energetic of the Saxon kings were victorious over the neighbouring states, and exercised an authority over their fellow-sovereigns. This power was always attained by strength in war, and it was never bestowed upon the successor of one, who had borne it. To this ruler the title of Bretwalda was sometimes given.

CHAP. I.

A. D. 827.

Supremacy of Egbert, King of Wessex.

In A. D. 827, however, Egbert, king of Wessex, triumphed over all his brother monarchs, gained possession of all the seven kingdoms, and united them, although not so firmly nor so consistently as was the case afterwards, into one strong state. He, however, and the five kings who succeeded him, still retained the simple name of King of the West Saxons.

Propagation of the Gospel in England.

With the Saxon conquerors barbarism returned, and Christianity fled, with the Britons, to the forests and the hills. Darkness once more came down upon the land. But, at the end of the sixth century, a company of pious men, the leader of whom was named Augustine, came to England, in the pure missionary spirit of love to fallen souls. They were sent by Gregory the Great, who was at that time the Bishop of Rome. He had, some years before, seen, in that city, some fair-haired boys who had been carried thither to be sold as slaves. When he saw them, his heart was touched with pity for their unhappy condition, and he asked who they were. He was told that they were Angles. "Angels rather," he replied, "for they have sweet, angelic faces; and they would be angels hereafter, if they knew my loved Redeemer's name." This scene was never effaced from his mind; and he gave himself no rest, until he had sent men to their native land to preach the Gospel to their heathen countrymen.

CHAP. I.

A. D. 597.

St. Augustine and his companions.

Augustine and his companions went first to Kent, as the king of that country had married a Christian queen. King Ethelbert treated them kindly; gave them a house and church at Canterbury, his chief town; and subsequently became a convert to their faith. The light of Christianity again spread through the land, and glorious was the change from the thick, gross ignorance, which had before prevailed. The faithful men, who brought it, were in error regarding many subjects, and their behaviour towards the British Christians was not altogether what it ought to have been; but they were good, true-hearted, earnest men; and Englishmen, whose country owes to them the greatest of all blessings, should always remember them with reverence and love.

CHAPTER II.

THE SAXON MONARCHY FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT UNDER EGBERT TO THE HEIGHT OF ITS POWER UNDER EDGAR.

From A. D. 827 to A. D. 975.

Incursions of the Danes—Their successes against the Saxons—King Alfred:—his reverses,—his victories,—good government,—and character.—The reign of Edward—Athelstan—conquers the Danes—his able rule—The reign of Edmund—Edred—An account of religious houses—Dunstan—Edwy—The pathetic story of Edwy and his queen—Edgar's long and peaceable reign—his evil character—Elfrida.

Incursions of the Danes.

The Anglo-Saxons were now united in one kingdom under one head: but the quiet, which might naturally have been expected after so happy a union, was marred by frequent invasions of the Danes or Northmen. This warlike people were of the same race as the Saxons themselves, and were, at this time, very similar to what the Saxons were, when they first arrived in Britain. The Danes had fled from Germany before the face of a powerful ruler named Charlemagne; and, being joined in the northern seas by men as fierce and wild as themselves, they sallied forth in large,

CHAP. II.

swift vessels to wage common war upon mankind. Under the Sea-Kings, as their chiefs were called, they laid waste the coasts of all the countries near the sea. They frequently landed on the shores of England, but not in sufficient numbers to cause any lasting fear. They came and went swiftly; but, during their short visits, they committed every kind of outrage, and were a dread and terror unto all. They were fierce and unrelenting pagans, hating the very name of Christianity, and delighting only in deeds of battle and rapine.

They are defeated by Egbert.

During the reign of king Egbert, their attacks on England were met by a steady and vigorous resistance. At one time they joined the Britons in Cornwall, and marched into Devonshire, but were speedily driven back by the energetic king.

Egbert's death.

But at this time of strife and anxiety, and of watching sadly for the sails of the fierce Sea-Kings, Egbert died, and was succeeded by his son Ethelwolf, who was a quiet and unwarlike prince. Calamities now fell fast and thick upon the land.

The Danes first settle in England.

The Danes made frequent attacks, and, at length, finding that they were not opposed with such spirit and boldness as they had experienced before, began to settle in England; and a large party of them prepared winter quarters for themselves in the isle of Thanet, on the north-eastern coast of Kent. During the following twenty years, they increased in numbers, confidence, and power; and,

A. D. 871.

although they were often defeated by the Saxons, they gradually spread over the face of the country, carrying death and misery whithersoever they went. The gaps which were made by death in their armies were filled up by swarms of savage men from beyond the sea; and when Alfred, the youngest son of Ethelwolf, ascended the throne, after his brothers, Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethelred, who had reigned in succession, almost the whole of England was in the possession of the Danes, the people of Wessex alone making a stand against them. Delighting in reading and study, Alfred did not at first desire to reign: but, thinking afterwards that it was his duty to help the people in their need, he consented, at their request, to rule over them in the place of his brother Ethelbert's infant son. Immediately after his accession, he prepared for a vigorous resistance against the enemies of his country. He was, at first, successful, and compelled the Danes to enter into an agreement, by which they promised to share the kingdom with him, and to confine their rule to the northern portion, while he retained the south.

King Alfred.

But the Danes speedily broke their engagements, and renewed their attacks upon Alfred and his people. The king had not behaved well during the short interval of peace. He had grown proud and selfish; he had neglected to shew equal justice to his subjects; and he had treated

His reverses.

CHAP. II.
A. D. 877.

those who were around him with disdain, because they did not possess that knowledge and learning which he so dearly loved. His people had, therefore, lost confidence in him, and refused to follow him to the field. They would not join heartily in the defence of their country; but, in most instances, provided for their safety by fleeing into Wales or France, or by yielding tamely to the foe.

Conceals himself in a peasant's hut.

Alfred himself was obliged, during this season of danger, to conceal himself from the enemy in the cottage of a peasant. While in this retirement, the wife of his humble host, being ignorant of his rank, desired him one day to watch the baking of some cakes, which she had placed upon the hearth. He willingly complied: but, the woman finding upon her return that the cakes were burnt to a cinder, scolded him severely for his carelessness, saying that he was willing enough to eat her cakes, but too lazy to take care of them. The king, being fully occupied by the consideration of his country's wrongs, had forgotten her request: but he bore her expressions of wrath with cheerfulness and good humour.

His courage and self reliance.

But notwithstanding his former misconduct, which sorrow and danger had effaced, Alfred had a noble heart, and, even in that hour of gloom, he did not yield to despair. In the hidden places of the woods he gathered together a small band of followers, and encouraged them with hopes

CHAP. II.

A. D. 878.

of victory. His principal place of retreat was a small river-island in Somersetshire, named Athelney, from which he made several attacks upon the Danish forces.

Enters the Danish camp disguised as a minstrel.

At length all was ready for an assault upon the chief encampment of the Danes. As the sun arose one morning on the Northmen's tents, a fair-haired Saxon youth, with a minstrel's harp in his hand, drew near, asking permission to play to the soldiers, and to cheer them with his songs. Leave was readily granted, and soon groups of hardy warriors were to be seen gathering around him, leaning upon their large two-handed swords, and listening attentively to his stirring tunes. The fame of the harper reached their chief, who sent for him, and desired to hear him play. After a few days' sojourn in the Danish camp, he withdrew, and betook himself to the woods where the Saxons were concealed. All greeted him there with words and looks of joy, for the minstrel youth was Alfred, their well-beloved king.

Defeats the Danes.

He immediately led his troops to an attack upon the Danes; for, during his stay in their camp, he had discovered its weakest points, and was, consequently, able to fall upon them in those quarters that were least guarded. A complete victory was the result. The greater number of the enemy were destroyed, and the remainder, with Guthrum their leader, fled to a fortified encampment to which Alfred laid siege. Pressed hard by hunger,

CHAP. II. A. D. 878.

they at length yielded to the Saxon conqueror, who, remembering mercy in victory, spared their lives; permitted those that desired it to leave the land in safety; and, with the design of turning them from enemies into faithful friends, agreed to give East Anglia and Northumbria, which had been entirely desolated by the late wars, to those that chose to remain, upon the condition that they should become converts to Christianity.

Peace concluded with the Danes.

Guthrum and many of his followers, consenting to this proposal, were baptized, and were allowed to settle in the north of England. During the remainder of his reign, Alfred, though he held the Danes in check, governed only in the south, and beyond his dominions were the Danish colonies, or, as the ancient writers call them, the armies of Northumberland, which were a source of constant trouble to his successors.

King Alfred's good government.

The land had now rest for many years: and Alfred was enabled to turn the whole of his attention to the welfare of his country and his people. He made admirable preparations for defending his kingdom, by arming all his subjects, and appointing them to regular posts and guards; he built a fleet of warboats to protect the coasts; he attended to the strict administration of justice; and he prepared many new and useful laws, improved many of the old ones, and saw that all were attended to both by the people themselves and by

the judges who presided over the courts. His police arrangements were admirable, and they brought back such order and security to the country, that golden bracelets, it is said, could be hung up in the highways, and no one would dare to touch them.

His labours for his people's good.

In the midst of severe bodily ailments, Alfred did more for the benefit of his people than any Saxon king. He brought his country into a state of peace and order, after many years of war; he defeated the Danes and kept his kingdom in an excellent position of defence; he founded schools for the young, and the University of Oxford is said to owe its being to him; he prepared books for his people, and translated works from Greek and Latin, so that they might derive benefit from the wisdom which he had acquired; and he introduced into the land a love of learning, which remained in full vigour for several years to be a blessing and a glory to her. He divided his time each day into three equal portions. One he set apart for business; another for prayer and study; and the third for his meals, exercise, and sleep. There were no clocks in those days: and he contrived, therefore, to know the lapse of time by burning rushlights of equal length, making them to burn steadily by placing them within lanterns made of horn, as the cracked walls and poor furniture of even the noblest houses afforded no protection against the influence of the wind.

CHAP. II.

A. D. 897.

Conflicts with the Danes.

Towards the latter part of his reign, his employments were often interrupted by incursions of the Danes. On one occasion, the wife and children of a sea-robber, named Hasting, fell into his hands, but, contrary to the usual custom of that age, he treated them with the greatest kindness, and restored them at the first favourable opportunity.

The death of Alfred.

A. D. 901.

When, after a period of twenty-nine years, his brilliant reign was ended by his death, there was quiet in England; the people were prosperous and happy; and the greater number of the inhabitants of the north, appeared to have been converted into industrious and peaceable cultivators.

Edward the Elder.

Alfred was succeeded by his son, Edward, who was at first opposed by one of his cousins, a son of a former king. This prince's reign was occupied in frequent and successful resistance to attacks from the Danes, both from those who were within, and from those who were without, his kingdom. He was brave and warlike, and kept the country in an admirable posture of defence.

The reign of Athelstan.

Upon his death, after a reign of twenty-five years, Athelstan, who is supposed to have been his illegitimate son, was elected king, as his legitimate sons were too young to govern properly in times of danger. This was a wise act: for Athelstan had the will, power, and ability to oppose the unruly Danes, who, receiving

constant reinforcements from their countrymen in the North, were a continual source of discomfort to the land. An invasion of England was, in this reign, attempted by Anlaf, a Danish prince who had been expelled from Northumbria, by the king of Scotland, and the Anglo-Danes: but they were defeated, after a long and arduous battle at Brunsbury, which was remembered by the Saxons for ages after in their tales and songs.

CHAP. II.

A. D. 925.

His wise and skilful rule.

Successful as he was in war, Athelstan did not neglect the arts of good government. He has left behind him a high name as a skilful ruler; and particular mention should be made of one of his laws, by which he ordained that every merchant, who had made three voyages on his own account, should be created a Thane, or gentleman.

The reign of Edmund.

Athelstan's legitimate brother, Edmund, was the next king. After a short reign, which was disturbed by the usual warfare with the Danes, he was killed in a scuffle with a robber and outlaw, who presented himself in the royal banqueting room which he insolently refused to leave.

Edred.

His sons were too young to succeed, and his brother Edred, a prince of mature age, was, therefore, chosen to fill the throne. Soon after his accession, the Danes again rebelled; and Edred, after subduing them, took measures for ensuring their future obedience by placing Saxon garrisons

CHAP. II. A. D. 946.

in the Danish towns, and by appointing Saxon governors over them.

An account of religious houses.

Domestic feuds and troubles began to come upon the land in Edred's reign, and it is necessary for us to relate the origin of those unhappy disputes. About three or four hundred years after the Christian religion was first preached, men began to retire from the affairs of the world, and, joining together for religious services, to lead a life of quietness and devotion in houses set apart for that purpose. Many benefits resulted, in the first instance, from this arrangement. Learning and piety flourished within the walls of those houses, and, in the midst of a rude age, were preserved in all their freshness and purity. But although men may retire from the society of their fellow-men, they cannot flee from the influence of the world: and, for several reasons, the religious communities speedily began to decline. A feeling very generally prevailed in after times, that those, who thus devoted themselves to a secluded life, ought always to remain unmarried, and to separate themselves entirely from the pleasures and the duties of the world. Those also, who inflicted needless severities upon themselves, were held in high estimation: and the Bishop of Rome, who, at this time, began to assume authority over other bishops, encouraged these mistaken opinions.

CHAP. II.

A. D. 946.

Convents founded in England.

After the gospel had been received in England, many convents, as these religious houses were called, were established in the land, to which they proved a great blessing. Many of their inmates married; mixed, in a measure, with society; and tried to fulfil their duties in it with profit to themselves and with benefit to others. But in the reign of Edred, men, holding the strange doctrine which we have mentioned, began to abound in England. Among them also were many good and faithful persons, although their opinions were, in various matters, mistaken.

Dissensions between the secular clergy and the monks.

Dissensions soon arose between the two parties, who were respectively called the secular clergy and the monks. King Edred supported the latter, and endeavoured to promote their views. At this time, Dunstan, a monk, who became very popular in England on account of his austere life, acquired high favour at court. He obtained great influence over the king, and the charge of the treasury was put into his hands.

The reign of Edwy.

By the help of Dunstan and of Odo, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the monks gained great power during the reign of Edred, and most of the convents were given to them. The next king, however, was of a different nature. He was young, handsome, and opposed to the severe men who desired to rule him and his kingdom.

CHAP. I.
A. D. 955.

Soon after ascending the throne, he married Elgiva, his cousin, whom he dearly loved. Dunstan and the Archbishop of Canterbury resolutely set their faces against this marriage, because Elgiva was too nearly related to him, and it is generally supposed that Dunstan used violent and unseemly language towards Edwy and his wife, upon the king's withdrawing one day from a feast, where Dunstan and some of his courtiers were assembled, and retiring to enjoy the society of Elgiva and her mother.

Disputes between Dunstan and the king.

Edwy subsequently demanded from Dunstan an account of the treasure, which had been placed under his charge by the late king, and banished him from the country upon his being unable to furnish all the required statements. A civil war followed. Dunstan's party incited many of the people to rebel against the young king, and to recognise Edgar, his younger brother, as their sovereign. Dunstan himself returned from exile to take part in the insurrection, which ended in the defeat of Edwy, who was compelled to share the kingdom with his brother.

The accession of Edgar.

Edwy died soon after, and Edgar became the undisputed ruler of England. He favoured the monks in every way, and made their leader, Dunstan, the Archbishop of Canterbury, upon the death of Odo. But, although he is highly praised by the monkish writers, he was a very immoral

prince. Hearing once of the great beauty possessed by the daughter of one of his most powerful earls, he ordered one of his favorite followers to pay her a visit, and to ascertain, by personal enquiry, whether the account which he had received was true or not. The courtier obeyed: but, himself falling in love with the lady, he assured the king that she had been praised too highly, and he received the royal permission to marry her himself. Hearing by accident that this statement was false, Edgar resolved to see her. The nobleman, dismayed at the purpose of the king, entreated his wife to conceal her beauty: but she was proud, vain, and angry at the deceit which he had practised, and she used her best endeavours to please the king, who murdered her husband, and made her the partner of his throne.

CHAP. II.

A. D. 975.

Edgar shewed himself a ruler of ability, and his reign proved so tranquil, that he has received the surname of 'the Peaceable.' The Saxon power attained its full height during his administration: the island was well defended; the Danes were kept in thorough subjection; many foreigners settled in the land, and introduced various useful arts; and the petty sovereigns around acknowledged the superiority of their powerful neighbour, and obeyed his will.

The Saxon power at its height.

CHAPTER III.

DECLINE OF THE SAXON POWER.

FROM A. D. 975 TO A. D. 1066.

Edward the Martyr—His violent death—Renewed attacks of the Danes—Ethelred the Unready—His unwise policy—Massacre of the Anglo-Danes—Invasion of Sweyn—Ethelred flees to Normandy—Returns on the death of Sweyn—Struggle between Edmund Ironside and Canute—Canute ascends the throne after Edmund's murder—Severity at the beginning of his reign—Clemency at the end of it—Anecdote of Canute—Harold Harefoot—Hardicanute—Return to the Saxon line—Edward the Confessor—Earl Godwin—Disputes between the king and the Godwin family—Edward's partiality to the Normans—The Normans—Harold—His visit to Normandy—Is chosen king—The Duke of Normandy prepares for invasion—Tosti and Harold Hardrada invade Northumberland—The Norman invasion—The battle of Hastings, and the death of Harold.

EDGAR was succeeded by his son, Edward, to whom the name of Martyr has been given on account of his early and violent death. Elfrida, his step-mother, whom Edgar had married in the

guilty manner which we have related, had a son seven years of age, and she eagerly desired to see him seated upon his father's throne. The young king was one day hunting near Elfrida's residence, when he left the chace, unaccompanied by any of his retinue, to pay a visit to his brother, whom he had always treated with peculiar affection. On arriving at the door, he did not dismount, but he requested her to desire a cup of wine to be brought to him: and, while he was raising it to his lips, a servant, by Elfrida's orders, stabbed him in the back. He immediately galloped away: but, falling off his horse from faintness caused by the wound, his foot caught in the stirrup, and he was dragged along the ground until he died.

CHAP. III.
A. D. 975.

Reign of Ethelred the Unready.

His brother, Ethelred, for whose sake Elfrida had murdered him, succeeded him upon the throne. Ethelred's was the longest and the saddest reign of all the Saxon kings. He was never prepared for the attacks of his enemies, for which reason he received the name of 'The Unready', and, when they made a sudden descent upon the land, he adopted the most foolish plans for inducing them to depart. The Northmen had, for some years past, been employed in plundering other parts of Europe, and had refrained from attacking England, which had hitherto been governed by brave and enegertic rulers. At this time, however, they renewed their

CHAP. III.
A. D. 978.

attacks, as the conjuncture appeared to be favourable for the enterprise, the king being young and foolish, and their countrymen in England being prepared to assist them. Instead of meeting with a brave and stubborn resistance, they were induced to depart by the payment of money. Time after time they returned, and on each occasion they received a larger bribe. At length a cruel, cowardly deed exasperated them to such a degree that they renewed their invasions with force sufficient to dethrone the Saxon king, and to conquer the Saxon country.

Massacre of the Anglo-Danes. Nov. 13th 1002.

Former Saxon monarchs had taken into their service a chosen band of Danes, who were a pest to the parts of the country in which they were stationed, and were thoroughly hated by the Saxon inhabitants. They were brave and warlike: but they often betrayed those, whom they had agreed to serve. King Ethelred; taking advantage of the hatred which the people felt against these unruly troops, resolved to get rid of them by a wholesale massacre; and a day was chosen, on which to carry out this cruel project. Exasperated against the Danes, the Saxons too faithfully fulfilled the wishes of their sovereign, and they slew not only the detested foreign soldiers, but many others also of that race, without regard to sex or age.

Retribution soon followed. Sweyn, the king

CHAP. III.

A. D. 1003.

Invasion of Sweyn, the king of Denmark.

of Denmark, whose sister had been among the victims, landed during the following year upon the northern coast of England. The Saxons could not withstand the attack of the avengers, who advanced into the heart of the land, committing the most horrible excesses whithersoever they went; and the utmost misery prevailed in England during this period of warfare. Ethelred, who had married Emma, the sister of the Duke of Normandy, fled to that country, and Sweyn was left the undisputed master of the land.

Warfare between the Saxons and the Danes.

The conqueror, however, died soon after his success, and Ethelred, at the invitation of his people, atempted to regain his former power. But the war was continued with increasing bitterness. Canute, the son of Sweyn, was as great a warrior as his father; and, although he was vigorously opposed by Edmund, the heir to the Saxon throne, was generally successful.

Edmund Ironside.

Upon Ethelred's death, Edmund, who was called Ironside on account of his enduring courage, became king, and carried on the struggle with manly perseverance. Several well-contested battles were fought between him and Canute: but there were foul traitors around the Saxon king, the chief of whom was a nobleman named Edric. In the first engagement that occurred, Edric, cut off the head of a fallen thane, who bore a great resemblance to Edmund, stuck it upon a spear, and shewed it to

CHAP. III. A.D. 1016.

his countrymen, with the exclamation that their king was slain. Immediately the Saxon troops fell back, dismayed and sad: but Edmund, taking off his helmet to prove that he was yet alive, rallied them and led them on once more, although to an indecisive victory. In another action, Edric, still upon the side of the Saxons, gave the victory to Canute by fleeing with his followers at the beginning of the battle.

Division of the kingdom.

At length the several nobles of the contending parties insisted upon their leaders making an agreement, by which the kingdom was divided between the two sovereigns; Edmund retaining the southern portion of it, and Canute receiving the northern. The survivor, upon the death of either party, was to possess the whole. This settlement put an end to the harassing warfare between the Saxon and the Dane, which had desolated the land for more than two hundred years.

Accession of Canute to the throne of England.

Edmund was soon afterwards murdered by one of his own courtiers; and the English crown devolved upon Canute, who was at the same time the sovereign of Norway and Denmark. The two infant sons of Edmund were sent to the court of the king of Sweden, and finally to Hungary, where Edmund, the younger of them, married, and became the father of Edgar Atheling, of whom mention will be made hereafter, and of Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland.

CHAP. III.

A. D. 1017.

Canute was, at the beginning of his reign, as fierce and cruel, as he had been during the days of strife. He put to death many of the Saxon nobility, and gave their estates to his own powerful lords; he was harsh in his treatment of his new subjects; and he seemed determined to shew by the strictness of his rule that he was not to be easily displaced from the throne which he had won.

The reign of Canute.

But his temper changed towards the close of his life, and he tried to gain the affections, as well as the obedience, of his people. He sent back as many of the Danes as he could spare to their own country; and he firmly adhered to the laws and customs of the Saxons. His warlike fierceness also passed away with the vigour of his youth. He became devoted to religion, and, according to the superstitious feelings of those days, he undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, which was, at that time, considered a feat of exalted piety. To strengthen his position upon his newly won throne, he married Emma the sister of the Duke of Normandy, and widow of his predecessor Ethelred.

An anecdote of the king.

Being the possessor of enormous power, and the ruler of three great kingdoms, he was peculiarly exposed to the flattery of his attendants, and a pleasing story is told of the manner in which he was accustomed to rebuke them. Some of his courtiers were one day talking of his greatness, and they asserted, within his hearing, that nothing was be-

CHAP. III. A. D. 1035.

yond the reach of his will. He was at the seaside, and, immediately ordering a chair to be placed on the beach, while the tide was rising, he addressed the ocean in words of authority, and commanded it to retire, without daring to wet his feet. Still, the waves, unheeding human voice, flowed on, until they gently plashed around his seat. Then, turning towards those near him, he remarked in a quiet, solemn tone, that absolute power belonged to One alone, who was able to say to the sea "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther."

Death of Canute, and accession of his eldest son.

Canute died after a reign of nineteen years, and his son, Harold, succeeded him, as king of England. The late king had intended the throne for Hardicanute, his son by queen Emma: but Harold was upon the spot to support his claim, and Hardicanute in Denmark. A civil war was avoided by a division of the kingdom, the younger brother receiving authority over the districts south of the Thames.

Reign of Harold Harefoot.

Harold was called Harefoot on account of his swift running. His reign is only noticeable for the cruel murder of Alfred, one of king Ethelred's sons, who had come to England on a visit to his mother. Harold died after a short and unprofitable reign, leaving Hardicanute as his successor. This sovereign was of intemperate habits, and he died from excess at a wedding feast.

Edward the Confessor.

The crown now returned to the proper Saxon

A.D. 1042.

line, and the people of that race hailed with exceeding delight the accession of Edward, the son of Ethelred and Emma. During his reign all differences between the Danes and Saxons ceased: troubles in Denmark prevented Canute's only surviving son from attempting an invasion; the Danes in England settled down to peaceful employments; and, a few years later, the Norman conquerors reduced both them and their ancient enemies to subjection.

The characteristics of his reign.

The new king was called 'The Confessor', on account of his devotion to religion, which was exhibited in so extravagant a manner, that he appeared better fitted for a convent than a throne. But he was mild and equitable in his rule; and the Saxons for many years looked back to his reign with pleasure, and remembered with regret those laws and charters which he had instituted or improved, and for the revival of which they sighed, when oppressed and harassed by the Normans.

Earl Godwin.

Edward principally owed his throne to Godwin, a nobleman, who had risen from the condition of a peasant to great power and popularity; but the good understanding between them was not of long duration. Godwin was strongly suspected of being concerned in the murder of Alfred, the king's brother: and Edward not only hated him on this account, but feared him for his power.

It had been the custom for many years past to

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Administration of the Saxon nobility.

entrust the great provinces of the Saxon monarchy to the charge of powerful earls, who often possessed sufficient power and influence to control the counsels of their king. The evils of this arrangement became very evident during the latter part of the Saxon rule. The treachery of noblemen entrusted with such power hastened the conquests of the Danes; and, in the time of Edward the Confessor, the greater part of England was in reality, although not in name, under the authority of Godwin and his family.

Disputes between Godwin and the king.

The king had married Godwin's daughter, a person of a very sweet mind and disposition, whom he shamefully neglected: and this treatment of the queen increased the angry feelings existing between Edward and his powerful subject. An occasion of quarrel soon arose. The king, who had passed many years in Normandy, was very partial to the people of that country. He invited many of them to England, and gave them various offices of importance. This conduct gave great offence to his own subjects, and particularly to Godwin: and an affray one day took place between the followers of a Norman noble, and the townspeople of Dover. The Earl was sent to punish the latter, who were under his immediate jurisdiction: but he refused to obey his sovereign's order, and broke into open revolt. He was, however, overcome, and was obliged to flee into Flanders.

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A. D. 1048.

After a short time, however, he returned with a large force, and, marching to London, prepared to give battle to the king: but an arrangement was entered into, by which Godwin, promising to be faithful to his sovereign for the future, was restored to all his honours, upon condition of his giving hostages for his peaceable behaviour. His nephew, and one of his sons, whom he surrendered as his hostages, were sent to Normandy, and the vexatious troubles and disturbances occasioned by the haughty Earl came to an end. He died not long afterwards, as he was sitting at table with the king; and he was succeeded in his high position by his son Harold, who possessed a sweeter disposition and a more pleasing manner than his father. As the king had no children, Harold aspired to the English crown, and employed all his influence and power to obtain that object.

Edward had, however, a rooted dislike to the Godwin family, and it is said that he offered the throne of England to his relative, William, the Duke of Normandy, when that noble paid a visit to his court.

The Normans.

The people of Normandy were the noblest among all the nations of Europe at the time of which we are writing. The Danish pirates, who had desolated the coasts of England so often, made similar attacks upon the shores of France. During

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the life of our king Alfred, a fiery and warlike chief, named Rollo, invaded that country and obtained from its feeble ruler a flourishing province in the north-west, which was called, after him and his followers, Normandy, or the land of the Northmen. Edward the Confessor promised his crown to the ruler of this powerful people: but, thinking afterwards that his choice was not pleasing to his people, he invited his nephew, Edward, to England. But the prince died a few days after his arrival, leaving a son named Edgar Atheling, who was too young and too weak to be thought of as successor.

Harold pays a visit to Normandy.

The claims of Harold were daily becoming stronger, when he went to Normandy for the purpose, it is supposed, of releasing his two relatives who had been sent to that country as the hostages of his father's conduct; and, while there, he fell into the hands of William, who informed him of the agreement entered into with the English king, of which he had before been ignorant. Being thus placed in William's power, he was obliged to take an oath, which was dictated by the Duke, to relinquish every claim that he himself possessed, and to assist his rival to the utmost of his power. This oath was taken in a full assembly of the Norman barons; and, as soon as the solemn words were pronounced, and the sacred book, over which the vow had been spoken, was removed, the Saxon noble was

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dismayed to find that the coffer, where it had rested, contained many sacred relics, to swear over which was, in that age, thought to be most effectually binding.

Popularity of Harold.

On his return to England, however, Harold considered that an oath, thus extorted by necessity, was null and void; and he renewed his efforts to gain the favour of the people. He conquered the Welsh, who had lately been carrying the miseries of war into the western counties; he restored Northumberland which had been given to his brother, Tosti, to its rightful governor, with whom he connected himself by marriage; and he procured the banishment of his brother, who had governed badly and was hated by the people for his tyranny. While Harold was thus gaining for himself a name for justice and wisdom, king Edward died, and the powerful Saxon noble, with the consent and desire of all classes, ascended the vacant throne.

William of Normandy prepares to invade England.

William of Normandy immediately sent a herald to demand the crown. The answer was an indignant refusal: and the Norman Duke prepared for war. Among his own people there were many trained and tried warriors: but the fame of the martial Normans had spread far and wide, and thousands from other parts of Europe hastened to the invader's standard.

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Defeat of Tosti and the Norman invasion.

In the meantime, Tosti, Harold's disappointed brother, having contracted an alliance with the king of Norway, had effected a landing in the north of England: but Harold had quickly marched to oppose them, and had completely defeated them, after a severe engagement at Stamford Bridge. But he had hardly time to rest after the victory, when news reached him that William, with sixty thousand men, had landed in Sussex. He immediately turned back to meet the new foe: and, although his army had been reduced by the recent battle, and by the desertion of many, who were vexed at not sharing, as they desired, in the Norwegian spoils, he found himself reinforced, as he proceeded to the south, by many true Saxon hearts, ready to do and dare any thing.

The battle of Hastings.

The Normans had landed at Pevensey in Sussex: but, hearing of Harold's approach, their leader advanced to Hastings, and, at about eight miles distance from that town, the two armies faced each other in battle array. Both were full of enthusiasm and ardour, and eager for the coming conflict: but their employments during the hours preceding the battle were very different. All night long the sounds of revelry and riot were heard from the Saxon host; but from the Normans psalmody and prayer. On the morning of the 14th October the memorable battle began. Harold, having no horsemen to op-

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pose the Norman knights, had drawn his men up on a rising ground in a compact mass, around which he had dug entrenchments, and constructed a barricade of shields. The Normans advanced to the attack, chaunting a war-song as they marched. The Saxons suffered severely from their opponents' arrows; but, when the encounter was hand to hand, nothing could break their firm array. After many hours of hard fighting, the order went through the Norman ranks for retreat. Backwards they fell, but fought as they retired: and the Saxons, leaving their secure position, pressed madly after them. But the retreat was only feigned, and with loud shouts the Normans turned upon their pursuers, who returned to their old ground, and remained as steady as before. The same stratagem was executed a second time with the same result. But the Saxons rallied round their king; the battle became fiercer than before; Harold, with two of his brothers, fighting on foot, encouraged his men to deeds of valour, and, though wounded by an arrow in the eye, was the bravest of all the brave men there. William also was in the thickest of the fight, and had three horses killed under him. The battle had lasted for several hours, and the sun was going down, when Harold was slain; his brothers and his boldest thanes had fallen around him, and on every side the Saxons gave way, closely followed by their exulting foes. Here and there, however, they

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turned in their flight, and opposed the conquerors. With a loss of 15,000, the Normans, victorious at last, encamped upon the field of battle, where a stately Abbey* in after days arose to commemorate the bloody contest.

Thus the last of the Saxon kings died in defence of his own just rights, and his country passed into the hands of William, Duke of Normandy.

* Named Battle Abbey.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

From A. D. 1066 to A. D. 1100.

William's caution after the battle of Hastings—Dissensions among the Saxons—William's advance to London—accepts the throne—and is crowned—Beginning of jealousies—The Conqueror's moderation—He returns to Normandy—Cruelty of the Normans—Revolt of the Saxons—Change in William's policy—Hereward's resistance—Fearful severities—Introduction of the Feudal Law—Animosity between the Saxons and the Normans—War with Scotland—Insurrections in Normandy—Revolt of the barons—Earl Waltheof—Family dissensions—Robert's rebellion—Single combat between the Conqueror and his son—War with France—The Conqueror's death—His character—The New Forest and the Curfew—William Rufus's accession—His fair promises to the Saxons—Attempts to seize Normandy from his brother—Amicable arrangement—The Crusades—Robert becomes a Crusader—quarrel with Anselm—William's violent death—His character.

The power and the spirit of the Saxons were

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Dissensions among the Saxons.

completely broken by the battle of Hastings and their leader's fall. No person possessed ability and influence sufficient to oppose the Norman invader, while painful dissensions prevailed among the Saxon nobles. The Archbishop of Canterbury proceeded to elect Edgar Atheling as king; but the young prince was of too feeble and irresolute a spirit to govern in times of trouble. Edwin and Morcar, the two powerful earls of Northumbria and Mercia, both of whom aspired to the vacant throne, retired to their possessions in the North, and, holding sullenly aloof, prepared to defend their own territories only from the Norman, instead of laying aside their foolish ambition and feuds, and uniting heartily against the common foe.

William's advance to London.

William used great prudence and caution after the victory at Hastings. He at first occupied himself in reducing some of the towns upon the sea coast, and preparing a safe retreat for his troops in case of a reverse. He then advanced towards the capital. Upon his approach, Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edgar Atheling himself, and many of the principal Saxon noblemen, came out to meet him, agreed to submit to his authority, and offered him the English crown, which, after a feigned hesitation, he accepted. The gates of London were opened to him; and, taking the precaution of erecting for his defence a strong castle which occupied

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Coronation of William.

the site of the present Tower of London, he entered the city. He was crowned with great pomp at Westminster on Christmas Day. At his coronation he took the usual oath of the Saxon sovereigns, promising to defend the rights of his new subjects, to protect the Church, and to govern with justice and moderation. To all appearance he was seated upon the throne at the request of the people, and the change of dynasty seemed, in no wise, more strange or unreasonable than the succession of Harold, or the government of the Dane. But upon the very day the crown was set upon his head, an occurrence took place, which laid the foundation of a long continued struggle between Saxon and Norman. When the assembly within the Abbey Church were asked whether they were willing to receive William as their king, there arose a shout of applause. The Norman soldiers without mistook this for an attack upon their leader. A tumult ensued. Many of the wooden buildings around the Abbey were set on fire; many lives were lost; and it was with great difficulty that order was restored.

The Conqueror's moderation after his triumph.

William, however, appeared very desirous to treat his Saxon subjects with kindness and moderation. He confirmed the principal thanes in the possession of their estates; he seemed disposed to rule according to their old established laws; and appeared determined to fulfil to the

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uttermost the vows which he had taken at his coronation.

Revolt of the Saxons.

The aspect of affairs appeared to be so quiet and prosperous in England, that William was induced to return to his native land at the beginning of the following year. He left his new kingdom under the charge of his half brother, Odo, the martial bishop of Bayeux, and of a favourite baron, named William Fitz Osborn, who were both stern, severe men. But directly his back was turned, his Norman soldiers treated the Saxons with the grossest insolence, and it was not restrained by those in authority. The Saxons rose against them, and a struggle between the two races began, which was not laid aside until the reigns of king John and his successor. Norman hated Saxon, and Saxon hated Norman with the most unrelenting hate. The Norman barons oppressed their Saxon neighbours, treated them with the utmost disdain, and branded them with names of insult. The Saxons returned the hatred with a hearty will, slew every Norman who was found wandering at any distance from his castle, and considered it a disgrace to shew friendship towards their haughty tyrants. Time, however, softened these bitter feelings. The rival nations were gradually drawn together, and, when united in after times, formed the brave and hardy race that now inhabits England.

William returned from Normandy, as soon as

he heard of the disturbances which his absence had occasioned. He speedily subdued them: but his whole policy was, from that time forward, altered. Instead of mildness towards the conquered, he used severity. Instead of seeking to gain their love by gentle means, he crushed their spirit by merciless rigour. Instead of treating them as subjects, he regarded them as his bitterest foes.

Change in the policy of the king.

Although the revolts which had occasioned his return were quelled, other tumults and insurrections speedily occurred. Edgar Atheling fled from his protection, and sought refuge in Scotland, where he was received with kindness by the king. Edwin and Morcar, whom the Conqueror had treated with favour, roused their followers in the north. Assistance was given them from Wales, and the king of Denmark aided them with a formidable force, which he was induced to withdraw by liberal presents from William.

Resistance to his authority.

But the most vigorous resistance was made by a brave Saxon thane, named Hereward, who, with many of the Saxon noblemen, took refuge in the marshes and fens around the city of Ely, and maintained a long and bold defence against the Conqueror's attacks. He was at length betrayed by some of his friends whose hearts had failed them. Most of his followers were captured: but he escaped to the sea, and continued to harass the Normans by attacks upon the coast. The Conqueror could, however,

Hereward, the Saxon chief.

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esteem a noble foe, and he frankly forgave Hereward and restored his confiscated estates. If there had been a few more such men among the Saxons, the Normans would not have long remained the masters of England.

William's merciless cruelty.

But though William shewed leniency to some of the Saxon leaders, he employed merciless severity towards their followers. When he had crushed the insurrection in Northumbria, he gave the country up to pillage. Every house was razed: every field laid waste: every instrument of husbandry destroyed, from the Humber to the Tyne. Famine followed slaughter, and it is said that 100,000 persons died by starvation or the sword.

Introduction of the Feudal law.

Rigorous treatment was also extended to other parts of the land. Most of the estates of the nobles were given to Norman barons; all offices of trust were filled by Norman lords; and the Saxon bishops were displaced by Norman prelates. He also introduced the Feudal law into England. Under this system all the land belonged to the king, and was divided among his barons, who rendered homage to him for their estates, and were bound to follow him, whenever he required their military services. The land was again divided by these great landowners among the knights of inferior rank, who, as the barons themselves had done to the king, promised entire obedience to their com-

mands, and were obliged to obey every summons to the field. The land was thus turned into a huge camp: and there was little likelihood that any resistance from the conquered Saxons would be effectual against such a strong and formidable system.

War with Scotland.

When tranquillity had been restored to his dominions William turned his arms against the king of Scotland, who had given shelter to the fugitive Edgar, and had aided the Saxons in their rebellions in the north. The Scottish king was soon induced to sue for peace: and Edgar Atheling surrendered himself a second time to his successful rival. William generously extended his favour to the poor, imbecile prince, to whom a liberal pension was afforded, and who ended his days in the quiet enjoyment of ease among his favourite dogs and horses.

Revolt of the Norman barons.

When he had fully completed the subjugation of his new possessions, William was summoned to Normandy to subdue an insurrection which had arisen in that country: but, while he was engaged abroad, troubles again occurred in England. On this occasion, however, they proceeded from his Norman, and not from his Saxon subjects. The proud Norman barons could not bear the severe control which William exercised over them. A feeling of discontent had for some time been experienced by the Norman nobility: but the first

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who gave expression to it was the Earl of Hereford, a son of one of William's chief favourites. The young noble had betrothed the Earl of Norfolk's daughter: but the Conqueror had refused his consent to the marriage. The alliance was, however, contracted: and, during the wedding feast the two Earls entered into a plot for shaking off their king's authority. Earl Waltheof, a Saxon nobleman, who had married William's niece, was present; and the part that he had taken in the conspiracy was revealed by his ungenerous wife. The revolt was easily quelled; and the last noble of the conquered race, who was beloved by the Saxons, his countrymen, and honoured by the Normans, was one of the victims.

Dissensions in the family of the Conqueror.

The king spent the remainder of his life in Normandy: but his latter years were embittered by dissensions in his family, and by the revolts of his Norman subjects. He had three sons: Robert, who was surnamed Curthose from the shortness of his stature; William, who succeeded to the throne of England; and Henry, afterwards the first English king of that name. Robert was a prince of hot and passionate temper; but open-handed, generous, and very popular among the young nobles of Normandy. He was extremely annoyed with his father, who had promised him that province, and had afterwards withheld it from him,

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A. D. 1077.

and was very jealous of his brothers to whom the king shewed great partiality. The two younger princes one day threw a bucket of water over Robert, as he was passing through the courtyard under their apartment. He immediately burst into a rage, and ran upstairs with his sword drawn, eager to take revenge. A disturbance ensued, which was stopped by the appearance of the king: but Robert, full of anger against his father and his brothers, quitted the castle, fled to the stronghold of a powerful baron, and openly proclaimed war. Many of the warlike men of Normandy joined him, and he even received secret assistance from his mother with whom he was a favourite.

Conflict between the Conqueror and his son.

This unnatural warfare did not last long. The castle, in which he had taken up his quarters, was one day besieged by the king. Day after day conflicts took place under the castle walls, and in one of these Prince Robert met a knight, clad, as he was, in full armour. A long and stubborn contest ensued. Both the combatants were brave and skilful, and both were full of ardour. At length the unknown knight was wounded, fell heavily to the ground, and, as he lay disabled there, cried aloud for help.

The voice was the voice of the Conqueror. In a moment, Robert dismounted and knelt beside his wounded father, with a prayer for pardon. At the time it was withheld: but the prince was soon afterwards restored to his father's favour, and

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entrusted with the charge of an expedition against the Scotch.

Invasion of France.

The death of his dearly loved wife, Matilda, in the year A. D. 1083 was the occasion of severe grief to the king; and four years afterwards he followed her to the grave. He had been, for some months before, in bad health: and the king of France had made this illness the subject of a coarse jest, which so irritated the passionate monarch that he vowed to take vengeance for it as soon as he should be restored to strength. Directly he was able to leave his sick-bed, he made an incursion into the French king's territories, laid field, and town, and village waste, and encouraged his army to commit the grossest excesses. He had taken the town of Mantes, and set it on fire; and, as he was riding from place to place, exulting in the ruin that he had caused, his horse trod upon some burning embers, and plunged so violently as to throw him forward upon the pommel of his saddle, and to inflict a severe injury, which was the occasion of his death.

The death of William.

He lingered a few days in acute pain; and, feeling at that solemn hour remorse for the cruelties and injustice of which he had been guilty, he attempted to quiet his conscience by bestowing wealth upon convents and churches, and by freeing many of those whom he had imprisoned. The moment that he died, the great barons of his court departed from his death chamber to look after

A. D. 1087.

their own interests, and the poorer of his followers seized on his armour, clothes, and trinkets, leaving his corpse to lie, unhonoured and disregarded, on the ground. When the body was borne to its last resting place, the funeral ceremony was interrupted by a man who had been deprived of his possessions by the king, and who claimed the ground on which the assembly stood. Restitution was made to the injured man, and the great Conqueror was committed to the grave; the scenes that occurred at his death and burial shewing how little he was loved.

His character.

William the First was a skilful general and an able ruler. He had a strong intellect, a passionate temper, and an iron will. He was sometimes generous to his enemies: but there is little to admire in his cruel, stern, severe character. His disregard to the feelings of others, and his unpitying tyranny are shewn in the fact of his having desolated above thirty miles of Hampshire, destroying the fields and villages within that space, in order to prepare a forest for hunting, an amusement of which he was very fond. That part of the country still bears the name of the New Forest. The penalty for killing game was in those days greater than that for the murder of a man.

A memorial of his reign still exists in an ancient volume called Domesday-book, in which an accurate account was made of the lands and the population within his new kingdom.

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A. D. 1087.

Upon his death bed he left Normandy to his eldest son; bequeathed a sum of money to his youngest son, Henry; and expressed a wish that William might be his successor on the throne of England. William left his father, before the death of the latter, to secure the quiet possession of the throne. Many of the barons, however, rebelled. The greater number of them had estates both in Normandy and England; they were afraid that they would be losers by the separation of the two countries; and they preferred as their king Prince Robert, whose easy, pliable disposition would unfit him for keeping them under strict control. Finding himself deserted by most of his Norman subjects, William applied for succour to the Anglo-Saxons, who, by promises of kind treatment, were induced to aid him, and with whose assistance he soon reduced the rebellious to obedience.

Accession of William the Second.

His promises to the Saxons were not fulfilled, their taxes and burdens were increased, and they entertained towards their king no feelings of affection or good will, during the remainder of his reign.

His faithlessness towards the Saxons.

After he had brought England into a state of tranquillity, William, anxious to gain all his father's dominions, endeavoured to take Normandy from his brother. He crossed the British Channel with a large army, and was prepared to undertake this disgraceful war, when the most influential barons on either side induced their leaders to come to a

Attempts to gain Normandy.

A. D. 1091.

friendly agreement, by which it was settled that the two countries should remain separated, as they then were, for the present, and that they should, upon the death of either of the brothers, become the possession of the survivor.

War between the royal brothers.

Prince Henry, angry that no attention was paid to his interests in this arrangement, retired to a castle named St. Michael's Mount, which had been given to him by his father, and there bade defiance to his brothers, who immediately advanced against that place, and compelled him to surrender.

The Crusades.

But in a short time all such petty wars as these were forgotten in the excitement of a war in which all Europe was engaged. In that age it was the custom for those who desired to show their love for religion to undertake long and painful journeys tc Palestine, and, as they imagined, to acquire sanctity by visiting its sacred scenes. It was at this time in the possession of the Turks and Saracens who cruelly persecuted the pilgrims: and a hermit, named Peter, had lately been a witness of the sufferings of his brethren in that country. On his return to Europe, he related what he had seen, and, encouraged by the pity which the tale occasioned, he travelled from place to place, exhorting all who cared for the honour of their faith, to arm themselves, to march to the Holy Land, and to rescue it from the hands of the unbelievers. This scheme was cordially welcomed by

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all. The strong enthusiasm rapidly spread through the length and breadth of Europe. Almost every one who could draw a sword offered himself for the sacred war. The poor took service under some great warrior lord : the rich assembled their followers : the infirm gave their blessings and their gold. Three hundred thousand, it is said, marched to Palestine, all wearing a cross upon their right shoulder, from which circumstance the war was called a Crusade.

The latter days of William.

Among the number was Prince Robert who had mortgaged Normandy to his brother William, for a moderate sum of money, and had joined the army of the Crusaders.

Having thus obtained quiet possession of both the kingdoms which he had coveted, William passed the remainder of his reign in oppressing his subjects, amassing riches, and quarrelling with his clergy. Lanfranc, whom his father had made Archbishop of Canterbury, and who was the only person that exerted any influence for good over him, had died early in the reign, and the see was kept vacant for five years, during which he enjoyed its revenues. During a serious illness, however, he appointed Anselm, a pious, zealous, but imprudent man, as Archbishop. This prelate most properly reproved the king for the manner in which he appropriated the property of the Church, and a hot dispute ensued, that was terminated only by the voluntary exile of Anselm.

Not content with the acquisition of Normandy,

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William was endeavouring to gain other possessions by purchase from the Crusaders when a sudden death put a stop to all his ambitious schemes. He was hunting one afternoon in the New Forest. He had just wounded a stag, and was galloping after it in the full ardour of the chase, when an arrow from an unknown hand pierced him to the heart. He fell from his horse quite dead, and his body remained for some time undiscovered on the spot where he had fallen. Some peasants, passing by that way a few hours after, saw the corpse, placed it on a rude cart, and conveyed it to Winchester, where it was privately buried, unhonoured and unwept. Only one person was present, as it is supposed, when the fatal wound was inflicted. Sir Walter Tyrrel, a French knight, was hunting with the king; and, without informing any one of the event, he fled to the coast, without a moment's delay. It is generally thought that he killed his sovereign by accident; but there is no evidence to prove this statement. Sir Walter, in after days, denied it: and there were many in that very forest, who, injured by the cruelty of the king or his father, might have contrived his murder.

His death, in the New Forest.

History has little of good to say concerning William the Second. His character was bad. He was extravagant in small things, but covetous in great; he was tyrannical towards his subjects, but affable to his courtiers; he was proud and fearless towards his fellow men, and glaringly impious to his Maker.

His character.

CHAPTER V.

THE REIGN OF HENRY THE FIRST, AND CIVIL WAR IN ENGLAND.

FROM A. D. 1100 TO A. D. 1154.

Henry Beauclerc seizes the crown—His marriage with Matilda—Begins his reign well—His reformation of abuses and his justice—Robert returns from Palestine—His invasion of England—Amicable arrangements—Anarchy in Normandy—The Norman barons apply to Henry for aid—The king interposes—Misgovernment continued—Henry invades Normandy—Defeats Robert and imprisons him—William, Robert's son—War with Louis of France—The encounter of arms at Audelay—Reconciliation with the king of France—Henry's return to England—Loss of his beloved son, William—The king's second marriage—His death—and character—Stephen usurps the throne—Quiet in England—War with Scotland—Excesses of the barons—Battle of the Standard—Matilda lands in England—Civil war—Stephen is taken prisoner—Matilda is crowned—Renewal of the war—the Earl of Gloucester is taken prisoner—His death—and the triumph of Stephen's cause—Treaty with Prince Henry—The death of Stephen—His character.

HENRY was hunting in the New Forest with the party which his brother had left a short time be-

fore he received his fatal wound. The instant that he heard of this event, the prince, without shewing any signs of sorrow or surprise, turned his horse's head, and galloped to Winchester, where the court was in those days held, to seize upon the royal treasure. The baron under whose care the treasury had been placed rode with breathless haste to prevent him, and to remind him of his elder brother's claims, who, according to the agreement entered into with the late king, ought to have succeeded to the crown. The greater number of the nobles present declared themselves, however, in favour of Henry; the treasure was committed to his charge; and, in a few days, he was crowned king of England.

Accession of Henry the First.

Not long after his accession, he married Matilda, the daughter of Malcolm, king of Scotland, and the niece of Edgar Atheling, and by this union gave the greatest delight to his Saxon subjects, who were pleased at beholding a princess descended from the ancient line of their own kings raised to the dignity of Queen.

His marriage with Matilda.

Henry began his reign well. He felt that his right to the throne was small, and that the crown, which he had unjustly gained, could be retained only by the firmness and vigour of his rule. He applied himself, therefore, to effect a reformation of the abuses that prevailed to a disgraceful extent throughout the land. The powerful Norman barons, secure from popular vengeance in their

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strongly-built castles, constantly oppressed and plundered the people around them, and were a curse and terror to all the poor in their neighbourhood.

The justice and good government of the king.

The new king set his face resolutely against these excesses: and, by the united exercise of persuasion and power, he gradually forced the proud, unruly barons to obey his will. By these acts he gained the title of the Lion of Justice, and acquired the fame of being esteemed a vigorous ruler in other countries besides his own. He confirmed the laws, which were in force under king Edward the Confessor, with a few additions and alterations made by the Conqueror, and gave the people a charter of liberties, which was taken afterwards as the groundwork of the Great Charter, and, although he imposed some heavy taxes, and was not so lenient after he was firmly seated on the throne, as he had promised to be to the Saxon population, his reign was more favourable to the people than that of any other Norman sovereign.

Robert asserts his claim to the throne of England.

In the meantime, Robert, who had shewn great courage in the ranks of the Crusaders, and had been at the capture of Jerusalem by one of their armies, was on his way to Normandy. He was in Italy, where he had married, and where he had remained for more than a year, at the time of William Rufus's death. When he heard of that event, he hastened to his native land, and immediately prepared an army for the invasion of England. The fame of his martial achievements

brought him many followers: but he found himself, when he landed at Portsmouth, opposed by a large force under Henry, who was supported by the barons and clergy of England, and by the free-will of the people, with whom the brave but weak minded Crusader was not popular.

Reconciliation of the brothers.

No action took place. The chief persons of each party persuaded the rival brothers to enter into an agreement, similar to the one formerly made with William; and the reconciliation between them appeared to be complete. Robert remained two months in England as Henry's guest, and then returned to Normandy.

State of Normandy.

But this state of things was not of long duration. Robert did not know how to govern. Removed from the battle-field, he lost all his energy and decision. Normandy was reduced to anarchy by the excesses of the barons; the peasants fled from their homes; the fields were deserted; the land was filled with sorrow; while Robert was idling away his time in shameful and inglorious ease.

The king of England acquires that country.

Some of the highest barons of Normandy applied for assistance to Henry, whose government of England presented a marked contrast to that of his brother. He immediately complied with their invitation, entered Normandy with an army, and induced Robert to promise a reform. But the evils continued, and, in the following year, Henry returned with a similar force. An engagement took place at Tenchebray, where Robert's army was entirely

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A. D. 1106.

defeated, the duke himself was taken prisoner, and the government of Normandy passed into Henry's hands. The king kept his brother a prisoner during the remainder of his life in Cardiff Castle. He treated him courteously: but with a degree of rigour which was not merited. This treatment of Robert, and the constant enmity shewn towards William, the son of the captive duke, are very disgraceful to the memory of Henry the First. He attempted to get William into his power: but those who had charge of the child conveyed him to a place of safety. When the young prince came to years of discretion he manifested a brave and manly spirit: and his cause was upheld by many of the principal persons in Normandy. But Henry continued to withhold that province from his nephew: and, notwithstanding the vigour and power of his government, and the quiet he had restored to the country, nothing can excuse his conduct in these disputes. He coveted Normandy, and was determined to keep it.

Warfare between Henry and the king of France.

Among those who befriended William was Louis, king of France, and a war consequently broke out between Henry and the French monarch. It was carried on in a desultory manner, and nothing of note occurred, except an encounter of arms, which was, at the time, much talked of in Europe, and which we will relate, as it is a good illustration of the manners and feelings of that martial age. Henry was riding near a little town named Audelay, with five

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A. D. 1118.

hundred of his choicest knights, when news was brought that Louis and four hundred of the bravest warriors of France were close at hand. Both princes were delighted at the idea of a personal encounter, and eagerly entered with their retinue into the thickest of the fight. All were in complete armour; and, though the battle was severe, few lives were lost, for only knights were engaged, and, with the courteousness of chivalry, they desired to capture, and not to kill, their enemies. William, eager for distinction, fought gallantly. The king of England was, at one time, in great danger: but he unhorsed the opponent who had furiously attacked him.

Loss of Henry's only son.

The Pope soon afterwards arranged a reconciliation between the two kings, and an agreement was entered into, in which the interests of brave prince William were neglected. Pleased at having brought this unprofitable war to an end, Henry returned to England, when an event occurred which embittered the remainder of his life. He had an only legitimate son, named William, whom he most dearly loved, and to whom he had shewn every token of affection. They had been together in Normandy: but they were to cross the Channel in different ships. The one that bore the king had already sailed. The prince, eager to follow his father, urged the crew of his vessel to their utmost

CHAP. V. A.D. 1120.

speed, and, at their request, freely gave them money to expend in wine. Excited by the liquor which they had drunk, they used the greatest exertion; the 'white ship', as she was named, dashed past every vessel which she neared; and, in the clear, cold moon-light, seemed to fly through the curling waves. But, while all was merriment and laughter on board, she suddenly struck upon a sunken rock which the drunken helmsman had forgotten to avoid, and immediately began to fill. The prince, with many of his attendants, was escaping in a boat, when the cries of his half-sister who was still upon the wreck, was borne to him over the waters. He put back to save her: but so many leaped into the boat on its touching the sinking ship, that it sank beneath the weight. Only one man was saved by clinging to the mast which remained above water. The captain was with him at first; but, hearing of the prince's death, he quitted his hold and sank to rise again no more.

The courtiers did not for some time dare to tell the king of this sad event. At last they sent a little boy into his presence to inform him of his loss. Henry felt the blow most keenly, for he never smiled again. There was mourning also in his court: almost every one of the chief nobility had lost, in the sunken ship, a relative or friend.

Second marriage of the king.

Henry soon afterwards married a second time:

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A. D. 1135.

but, as no more children were born to him, he was anxiously desirous that his daughter, Matilda, who had been married to the Emperor Henry V., and after his death to Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, should succeed him, and he required all the barons of Normandy and England to pay homage to her as their future sovereign. His death was occasioned by a severe fever that had been brought on by indulging in a dish of lampreys, a small fish of which he was very fond.

Character of Henry the First.

King Henry was surnamed Beauclerc, or the fine scholar, on account of his learning, in which he excelled all the monarchs of that day. His father had given him the best instruction that could then be obtained; and the trials and obscurity of his early life gave him a love for books and study. The skilful management of his barons, and his government of England, shew his ability as a ruler: but we cannot admire one, who was grossly immoral in his private life, and whose rigour towards a fallen brother proved that he had no real nobleness of heart.

Accession of Stephen.

Immediately after the king's death, Stephen, one of his nephews, upon whom he had bestowed every mark of kindness, and who had been one of the first to swear obedience to Matilda, hastened to England, where he was chosen king by the influence of his brother, the Bishop of Winchester, and other ecclesiastics, and was crowned with the

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A. D. 1135.

usual solemnity, all the nobles present breaking the faith which they had pledged to the Empress Matilda, by paying homage to him. Stephen, being a man of pleasing manners, was popular in England; and the delight, with which his accession to the throne was hailed, appears to have been very great. His usurpation seemed so easy and natural, that no opposition was offered to him, no party formed against him, and for three full years he remained in peaceable possession of his uncle's power. He was chosen king by the consent of all classes in the realm, who were, Norman and Saxon alike, unwilling to be ruled by a woman.

Disturbed state of England.

But Stephen had not the firmness of Henry. His barons returned to their old habits of murder and rapine; his own guilt in usurping the throne prevented him from restraining them; and, to increase the ill-feeling which on this account began to be felt against him, he engaged a large body of foreign soldiers who speedily joined the barons in a general pillage of the poor. While the commotion caused by these evils was increasing in extent and violence, the king of Scotland, embracing the cause of his niece, Matilda, invaded the northern counties: but he was defeated by Stephen near North Allerton, in a severe engagement, which is known by the name of the Battle of the Standard.

Beginning of the civil war.

In the following year, the Empress Matilda, Robert of Gloucester, an illegitimate son of the

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A. D. 1139.

late king, and a hundred and fifty knights landed at Arundel in Sussex: and Stephen, in the courteous spirit of that age, permitted his rival to travel in safety to Bristol, where her brother owned a castle. Followers quickly gathered around the Empress: and she soon found herself at the head of a considerable party, the life and soul of which was Robert, Earl of Gloucester.

Capture of the king, and accession of Mitilda.

The first campaign was of short duration. Stephen was one day besieging Lincoln castle, in which he hoped to capture two of his principal opponents. Robert, the moment he heard of this event, hastened to relieve his friends: but, as he drew near the town, he found his advance arrested by the river Trent which was flowing swift and deep. Turning to his followers, he spoke to them in an animating manner, and explained to them that the war might then be ended by one decisive blow. With a loud cheer, they dashed, all armed as they were, into the water, and swam across. The king had, at the time, few with him; but those few fought gallantly. Stephen himself, who was as brave as any knight that drew a sword, maintained a stubborn contest, even after his adherents had been put to flight. Knight after knight sank beneath the blows of his ponderous battle-axe; and, for a long time, he kept his assailants at bay. At length a stone struck him and he fell. He was taken prisoner; and, soon afterwards, Matilda was crowned at Winchester.

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A. D. 1141.

Government of the Empress Mitilda.

The Earl of Gloucester assisted her in the government of the country, which appeared to be returning to peace and quiet. It would have been well had such been really the case: for England was in a miserable state. Civil war increased the tyranny of the barons; great distress was felt by the people; famine, as well as bloodshed, added to their sorrows; the fields were uncultivated; the country was wasted; and many large towns were depopulated.

Changes in the circumstancees of the queen.

And the evil increased. Matilda possessed a harsh and unforgiving temper. The wife of the imprisoned Stephen begged for her husband's liberty; and her prayer was seconded by many others: but the new queen paid no regard to these requests. She was in London. The citizens, with whom Stephen had always been in high favour, rose in rebellion, and compelled her to flee in haste. The war was renewed with redoubled vigour by both parties. The Earl of Gloucester was taken prisoner soon afterwards; and, as he was the chief of the Empress's faction, he was exchanged for Stephen.

Continuation of the war.

In the engagements and sieges that ensued, Matilda was often in great danger. On one occasion she was hard pressed in the castle at Oxford, whence she had a narrow escape. Snow was on the ground. Dressing herself, therefore, and three of her followers, in white, she passed the

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A. D. 1147.

hostile sentinels unobserved, during the obscurity of night, and rejoined some of her friends.

Reconciliation of the contending parties.

The death of the Earl of Gloucester put an end to all her hopes of success: and, quitting the country, she resigned the throne to her powerful rival. A few years later, her son Henry, who was now sixteen years of age, undertook her cause: but the principal persons of each party brought about a reconciliation between Stephen and the young prince. A treaty was entered into, by which it was agreed that Stephen should reign during the remainder of his life, and that Henry should be his successor.

Affairs being thus happily arranged, the civil wars of the past sixteen years came to an end, and the land had rest.

Death and character of Stephen.

A year after this agreement was made, Stephen died. His reign had been full of troubles: and too surely did he find that those who eagerly and unjustly seize a crown find its possession fraught with mourning, care, and grief. Had he been the rightful king, or had he lived in times of peace, his name would have been remembered as that of a high-minded monarch and a benefactor of his country, for he was of a kind and courteous disposition, and he was willing to maintain the right, but he was unable to do so, because he had himself exhibited a notorious example of wrong. He had a pleasing manner, and was peculiarly

CHAP. V. A.D. 1154.

fortunate in securing the affections of those whom he desired to conciliate: but he had not the power to rule his turbulent subjects with the strong arm which it was necessary for kings in those days to use. He broke his good faith; and he received a bitter recompense.

CHAPTER VI.

THE REIGN OF HENRY THE SECOND.

FROM A. D. 1154 TO A. D. 1189.

Accession of Henry Plantagenet—The extent of his dominions—Reforms at the beginning of his reign—Dismisses the foreign troops—and dismantles many of the castles—Disputes with the clergy—Thomas à Becket—The king befriends him—Their intimacy—Becket's splendid mode of living—He is made Archbishop of Canterbury—Change in his habits—Collision with the king—Ecclesiastical abuses—The Constitutions of Clarendon--Becket agrees to them--Afterwards retracts—Is impeached—Prepares to submit—Henry will not listen to him—Becket's dignified conduct before the council—His exile—Reconciliation effected—Becket's triumphal return to London—His intemperate proceedings—Is murdered—His character—Henry's expedition to Ireland—State of that island—Strongbow—Henry's domestic troubles—Rebellion of his sons—His death,—and character.

HENRY the Second, who succeeded to the crown upon the death of Stephen, was the first of the line of kings which is known by the name of Plantagenet,

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A.D. 1154.

Accession of Henry the Second.

from a sprig of broom, that Henry's father had been in the habit of wearing on his helmet.* The beginning of his reign was full of promise. He was, before he ascended the throne of England, one of the most powerful princes of the time. At least one third of France was his. Some of the fairest provinces in that beautiful kingdom descended to him from his father and mother, and he obtained others by his marriage with Eleanor, who had been divorced by Louis, king of France. He was not the sovereign of these possessions. He paid homage to Louis for them, and nominally ruled under that monarch, as much as any other French noble: but, after England was added to his dominions, the subject was far more powerful than the sovereign in France. But these advantages did not tempt him to extend his territory by war. He was inclined to the employments of peace; he was bound more to England than to France; and he was detained there by the state of the country, which was slowly recovering from the evils of civil warfare.

Reforms at the beginning of his reign.

The first acts of the new sovereign were, like his grandfather's, of benefit to the people. He dismissed all Stephen's foreign troops, who had been a curse to the land; he did his utmost to repress the violence and lawlessness of his nobles; he destroyed almost all the castles in which they

* Planta genista is the Latin, and plante genet the French, for 'broom.'

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had hitherto practised evil without danger of punishment; and he bestowed many privileges upon the principal towns in the kingdom. He next proceeded to check the rising power of the clergy, which had gained such a height, as threatened to make them the sole masters of the land. They were striving, as far as lay within their power, to keep themselves separate, in privileges, as well as in employments, from the other classes in the state, and they thought that they were advancing the honour and interests of the Church by so doing: but they forgot that laymen formed a part of the Church as well as they, and that they were not therefore contending for her real good. The struggle which was now approaching its height had been silently and secretly progressing, since the days of Dunstan; but it was not to reach its full development, until the Church of England should, at a future period, be set in order.

Intemperate zeal of the king.

King Henry set himself the task of clearing away many flagrant abuses: but he was unfortunate in the manner in which he undertook it. If he had carried out his design with temper and tact, as well as zeal, it would have proved a real benefit to the people: but he used such intemperate haste and passion, that he effected no good, and only brought upon himself unhappiness and trouble. The principal person, who would, he hoped, assist him in his projects, was Thomas

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à Becket, his Chancellor; and, for that purpose, he made him the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Thomas à Becket.

Thomas à Becket was the most remarkable character of that age. He was an Englishman by birth, and was the first of Saxon blood, who had been promoted, since the Conquest, to any high office in the state. During the early part of his reign, the king had taken a great fancy to Becket, had raised him to many important posts, and had, finally, made him the Chancellor of England. In this office, Becket had shewn his ability for business. He had assisted the king in all the reforms that were found to be necessary in subduing the rebellious, and in restoring the law to its utmost vigour. He had also gained the personal favour of his sovereign, who treated him with the most marked tokens of regard. They rode, feasted, and hunted together: and often, in returning from an excursion among the fields and woods, Henry would canter into the courtyard of his favourite's house, enter the banqueting hall, and join in the revelry of the guests assembled there. Although he was an ecclesiastic, Becket was the gayest of the gay. He excelled in hunting and hawking. He was a gallant soldier, and had, two or three times, led his followers to the battle field. He kept up an enormous establishment. A gorgeous retinue followed him, whithersoever he went. Gold and silver glittered on his table. To all who pleased him he gave the choicest gifts. The highest nobles in the

and sent their sons to learn the arts of chivalry at his house. By splendour and magnificence, by profuse generosity, by a bland and courteous manner, he strove to gain popularity.

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Change in Becket's mode of life.

Such were the habits of the person, whom Henry made Archbishop of Canterbury, in order to carry out his designs of reform among the clergy. Becket refused the dignity at first, declaring that he would be obliged, if he accepted it, to serve the Church rather than the king: and, accordingly, a complete change came over him, as soon as he became the chief bishop of the land. He still kept up his large household, and part of the splendour of his retinue: but completely altered his manner of life. The gay courtier became a religious devotee. He wore sackcloth under his dress; he lived on the hardest fare; he was constant in visiting the sick and infirm. We thoroughly believe that he was sincere: but the change was as ostentatious, as it was sudden.

Becket resigns the Office of Chancellor.

He determined to uphold the interests of his order against the wishes of the king; and he assumed, therefore, a different manner towards his sovereign from that which he had before displayed. His first act was to resign the office of Chancellor, affirming, with perfect truth, that he could not perform the duties of Chancellor and Archbishop at the same time. The king, perceiving what this

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measure indicated was very angry; and immediately deprived his former favourite of another office which, he said, ought to be resigned as well as the Chancellorship.

Exemption of the clergy from the secular law.

But the dispute soon became more serious. The clergy had, before the Conquest, been subject to the ordinary courts of law for all crimes and misdemeanors: but William the First had altered this custom, and permitted them to be tried for all offences by men belonging to their own profession. This was a great evil. The offences of the clergy had increased; many had been past by unpunished; and the unfairness and abuses of the existing system were too plain to pass unnoticed.

Ecclesiastical abuses.

Soon after Becket had been made Archbishop, two notorious and abominable crimes were committed by a priest in Worcestershire. The offender was tried by an ecclesiastical court: and, when the king demanded that he should be delivered to the proper officers for trial before the usual courts of justice, the Archbishop refused to surrender him. The bishops were immediately summoned to appear before the king: and, when they were asked whether they were willing to adhere to the ancient laws and customs of the land, all, but one, replied that they were willing, except where those laws were against the interests of the clergy, or, as they expressed it, "saving their own order."

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A.D. 1164.

The Constitutions of Clarendon.

The king and the clergy were thus brought into direct collision. The former convened a meeting of the nobility at a place in Wiltshire named Clarendon; and certain articles were there agreed to by which the old laws were revised, and all the clergy were declared responsible to the judicial courts. These articles are known by the name of the Constitutions of Clarendon. Becket at first resolutely withheld his approval of them: but he afterwards found so few supporters, that he pledged himself to observe them without any secret reservation. But, after he had given his consent, he repented, and refused to add his signature to those of the other bishops and barons. He behaved in a very insolent manner to his sovereign, who, thoroughly vexed and angry at his opposition, treated him with as much severity as lay in his power. Time past on. Becket attempted to regain the favour of the king, and even appeared before a tribunal of laymen to answer for his conduct, and thereby shewed his acquiescence in the Constitutions of Clarendon: but even that token of submission failed to pacify the king. He then desired to leave the kingdom: but he was twice prevented from putting his design into execution. Henry demanded an account of his proceedings as Chancellor, which was a very unjust measure, as his having made Becket Archbishop, and the time that had elapsed since he had been Chancellor, proved that the king had hitherto believed he had been blame-

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less in that office. It was evident that Henry was determined to bring the dispute to an end—that either he must cease to be king, or Becket to be Archbishop.

Becket's dignified behaviour.

Driven to despair, Becket rose superior to all his trials. He had been unwise and haughty; he had rebelled against his sovereign; he had defied the master who had shewn him kindness: but his calmness and boldness gave him, in that hour of adversity, a manifest advantage. After celebrating divine service in his church, he went to the palace of the king, arrayed in his robes of office, and bearing a splendid silver cross in his hand. He there solemnly defied the power of the king, appealed to the decision of the Pope, expressed his repentance for ever having given his consent to the Constitutions of Clarendon, and requested permission to leave the country. At the conclusion of his speech, he was suffered to withdraw without opposition.

Flees to France.

Henry would not have granted him leave to quit the land; but he escaped in disguise on board a small boat in which he crossed the Channel to France, where, in the retirement of the abbey of Pontigny, he passed six years of exile. In this retreat he still maintained the quarrel. He excommunicated those who had opposed him, and supported the spirit of his party by intemperate letters.

At the end of the six years a reconciliation took

place, and Becket was permitted to return to England. He came back more in the manner of a conquering prince, than of a pardoned offender. He landed on the shores of Kent, through which county he passed in a kind of triumphal procession to London. He excommunicated the Archbishop of York and two other bishops, for disobedience to his commands, and behaved, if possible, in a more insolent manner than before his exile.

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A. D. 1170.

Reconciliation between Becket and the king.

The injured bishops fled to Normandy, where the king was then residing, and complained to him of Becket's insolence and injustice. As soon as he heard of this fresh indignity, Henry burst into an ungovernable fit of anger, and passionately exclaimed, that he was indeed friendless, if no one of all his idle courtiers dared to rid him of that turbulent priest. Four gentlemen of his court, hearing this exclamation, assumed that the king desired the Archbishop's death, and agreed to gratify his wishes. They travelled to England by different routes, and, meeting again near Canterbury, repaired to the Archbishop's palace, upbraided him for his base ingratitude to the king, and threatened him with the severest vengeance if he did not withdraw his sentence of excommunication.

His extravagant conduct after his return.

Upon their retiring from his presence, however, Becket calmly continued to perform the duties of his station, and, at the usual hour, pro-

Is murdered.

CHAP. VI. A. D. 1170.

ceeded to the Cathedral, to join in the evening worship of the Church. The service had just begun; the Archbishop, arrayed in his flowing robes, was standing at the altar; the first sweet notes of the choir were floating through the aisle; when the four warriors, completely armed, entered the Church with a threatening and boisterous demeanour. "Where is the traitor?" they exclaimed; "Where is the Archbishop?" Becket stepped boldly forward. "The Archbishop is here," he answered, "but he is no traitor." A scuffle ensued. Becket's friends endeavoured to persuade him to retire, and to find safety in flight: but he steadfastly refused to follow their advice. A few moments after, one of the murderers struck him down. Raising himself up in the attitude of prayer, he patiently awaited the stroke which shortly afterwards laid him low in death before the altar.

Sorrow of the king on hearing of the murder.

The king was deeply affected by the news of this horrible murder; he asserted his perfect ignorance of the plot, and his sorrow at its execution; and he received absolution from the Pope for all seeming concurrence in it, upon condition of his performing penance at the tomb of the murdered man.

Becket's character.

There are different opinions regarding Becket's character. According to some, he was a rebel; according to others, a saint: but the general

opinion is that, sincere though he might have been, holy he was not. Nothing can make rebellion and over-weening pride consistent with the Christian character.

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A. D. 1171.

Expedition into Ireland.

The king soon afterward undertook an expedition to Ireland. That island was in a very barbarous state. The people had been partially converted to Christianity by St. Patrick, in the fifth century, and the country had then been famous for piety and good learning: but it had since relapsed to the condition in which it had been before,—a scene of constant confusion, and of petty, savage warfare. Dermot, one of the minor kings of the country, had been, at the time of which we are writing, driven into exile; and he came to England for assistance, which Henry permitted his subjects to afford. A few knights, the principal of whom was Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, went over to Ireland with the exiled prince. A force of a dozen Englishmen was sufficient to put little armies of the Irish to flight: and Dermot was soon reseated on his throne. Henry afterwards followed with a larger army: but he encountered no serious resistance, and, after travelling through part of the country, in which he established some of his adherents, he returned to Normandy. Ireland became an appendage to the English crown, although it was so only in name, until the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Dissensions in the king's family.

King Henry's latter years were disturbed by the rebellion of his sons. The three eldest, Henry,

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A. D. 1183.

Richard, and Geoffrey, frequently conspired against him and they were assisted in their shameless behaviour by the king of France, and encouraged by their mother.

Last days of king Henry.

During one of these insurrections prince Henry died, sincerely lamenting the undutiful part which he had acted towards his father. A little time after this event, the king resolved to join a crusade in which the principal warriors of Europe were preparing to engage for the recovery of Jerusalem that had fallen into the hands of Saladin, a warlike, Mussulman prince: but another insurrection under Richard, the heir to the throne, prevented him from fulfilling his intention. His youngest and dearest son, prince John, had joined the rebels; and the news of this last affliction so completely overcame him that he flew into a great passion, and cursed all his undutiful children with the most bitter maledictions. His unhappy situation affected his health, and he soon afterwards died of a fever, which had been brought on by the agitation of his mind.

On his death-bed he was deserted by his attendants; and his body was left unregarded and uncared for, upon the spot where he had breathed his last, a sure proof that, with all his greatness, and with all his extent of power, he had not gained love which alone can sweeten life.

When prince Richard heard of the king's de-

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A. D. 1189.

cease, he hurried to the chamber where the body lay, and there, kneeling by the bed-side, he poured out his grief and lamentations for the misery that his father had endured. He felt that it had been his misconduct which had caused his parent's death.

CHAPTER VII.

RICHARD THE LION-HEARTED, AND COWARDLY KING JOHN.

FROM A. D. 1189 TO A. D. 1216.

Richard the Lion-hearted—His character—Disturbance at his coronation—Massacre of the Jews—Richard joins the Crusade—Alliance with Philip of France—Beginning of disputes—Richard reaches Palestine—The siege of Acre—Bickerings among the Crusaders—Philip returns to France--Richard overcomes the Mussalmans--Richard and Saladin—Truce—Richard's return—He is wrecked—Travels by land—Is imprisoned—The story of Blondel—The king is ransomed—The government of England during Richard's absence—John's base behaviour—The king's death—John usurps the throne—The murder of prince Arthur—The loss of Normandy—Quarrels with the clergy--The interdict--Excommunication of the king—The king of France prepares to invade England—John's abject submission to the Pope—Conflict with the barons—The king yields—Magna Charta—Renewal of the conflict—The barons invite the Dauphin to take the English crown—The death of John—His character—The three great events of his reign issue in good.

RICHARD the First, who succeeded his father on

the throne of England, was the hero of his age. He was a model of the fiery chieftain of the Crusades. Of a stature above the height of ordinary men, with a spirit that delighted in war, and a heart full of generosity, he at the same time exhibited a hasty rashness which hurried him into many an imprudent act. He was a poet and a minstrel: and the spirit that leaped at the trumpet's sound, melted at the strains of the harp. His character, and the opinion which the men of that time entertained of him, are shewn by his receiving the name of the 'Lion-hearted King.'

CHAP. VII.

A. D. 1189.

Massacre of the Jews.

From the moment he ascended the throne, he entered heart and soul into the crusade which was setting out for Palestine. He was crowned with great pomp: but his coronation day was disgraced by a shameful massacre of the Jews, a people that were then held in peculiar abhorrence by every nation in the world, at Westminster, where the king was crowned. It was occasioned by an accident: but a persecution against them rapidly spread through England, and was for a short time carried on with unrelenting vigour.

Richard joins the crusade.

As soon as he could collect sufficient treasure for the enterprise, king Richard turned his face towards Palestine. Philip, king of France, was also going thither: and the two sovereigns met in Burgundy, where they both swore faithfully not to sanction any invasion of each other's kingdoms during

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A. D. 1190

their absence, to support each other like brothers, and only to rival each other in gaining glory for the common cause. They were both proceeding by sea; and they did not expect to meet again, until they reached the Holy Land; but the winds were contrary, and they were both obliged to put into Messina, a port of Sicily, where jealousy and strife between them began. The two armies pursued their voyage, but the French reached Syria first, as Richard was compelled to stop on account of the weather at Cyprus, in which island he married a sweet lady named Berengaria, who accompanied her heroic husband to the scene of war.

Contention between Richard and Philip.

The crusaders were besieging the city of Acre, when the English arrived, and there the strife between Richard and Philip was renewed. The former crusaders had elected a king of Jerusalem. The throne was now vacant: and the French and English kings took the part of different candidates for the title.

King Richard in Palestine.

Acre fell soon after the arrival of the English, who, animated by their brave leader, performed great deeds of valour. Their king himself fought in the ranks as fiercely as any of his followers, and exposed himself to as much danger and fatigue. But Philip, angry and disgusted with himself, with Richard, and the war, returned to France; and the English king was left in command of all the troops in Palestine. In this station he ex-

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hibited the skill and courage of a practised general. Victory after victory was his. He advanced to Ascalon; and Saladin, the brave, generous, and high-minded leader of the Saracens, resolved to intercept him with an army of 300,000 men. Nothing could have pleased Richard better. The battle was at first doubtful: both the wings of the Crusaders' army were beaten in: but Richard, at the head of the centre drove back the Mussulmans with awful slaughter.

Truce with Saladin.

Filled with joy at the victory, Richard advanced to Jerusalem; but the ranks of his army were thinned by battle and disease; many were eager for return; he had not enough men with whom to besiege the great city, and he was obliged to conclude with Saladin a truce which was to last for three years, three months, and three days.

Saladin and Richard.

This warfare in the midst of the sands of Syria is full of the deepest interest: many were the gallant deeds achieved, and many a noble man had, with mistaken zeal, given up his all to do them. But of all the heroic men who battled there, the greatest were Richard, king of England, and Saladin. So high was the fame of the former, that his very name was, for ages after, a proverb among the Mussulmans. The latter rivalled Richard in deeds of courage and generosity. Once when the king was lying dangerously ill of a fever, Saladin sent him fruit and cooling drinks from his

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own board, and thus saved the life which was ebbing fast away.

The captivity of Richard.

When the truce was concluded, Richard left Palestine for England. A severe storm dispersed his ships, and the vessel in which he sailed was driven on shore. He was thus obliged to travel by land. But he had many enemies in the countries through which he had to pass, and he was forced to journey in the dress of a pilgrim. His disguise failed, however, to secure him from recognition. He was seized by the officers of Leopold, Duke of Austria, whom he had grievously offended in the Holy Land; he was thrown into a dungeon; and was loaded with the fetters of a captive. But the royal prisoner did not remain long in the power of the Duke of Austria, who was obliged to deliver him in to the charge of his superior, the Emperor of Germany.

The story of Blondel.

He was a long time in this loathsome captivity. His people did not know where he was, and they mourned for him, as for one whom they had loved and lost. There is a pleasing story told of the way, in which the place of his confinement was found. Blondel, his favourite minstrel, with only a harp for a companion, wandered from town to town, from village to village, from castle to castle, in search of his imprisoned master. One evening he drew near a strong fortress, seated himself under the walls, and played a tune which his lord had loved in happier times. The notes of the

first verse had scarcely died away, when some one within took up the strain, and sang the succeeding stanza in a bold, rich, martial voice. Two only knew that song: and Blondel's heart leaped for joy. His lord was found. His labour of love was ended. Returning quickly to England, the harper told his tale. The people of England were delighted that their sovereign was found. The ransom demanded for his release was high: but they freely gave their silver and their gold to redeem their lion-hearted king.

Ingratitude and faithlessness of Prince John.

When Richard left his native land, he had appointed the Bishops of Durham and Ely to rule it during his absence; and, although he shewed much kindness to his brother John, he did not allow that prince any share in the government. But John had an ungrateful and wicked heart. He seized his brother's dominions, and even intrigued for the continuance of Richard's captivity, for which purpose he entered into a league with Philip, king of France, to whom he paid homage for the possessions he had received in Normandy.

Richard's return to England.

On Richard's return, there was great rejoicing in England. He entered London in triumph; he was crowned a second time; and, in the midst of the general happiness, he shewed his generosity by pardoning the underhand behaviour of his brother. The remainder of his life was passed in petty warfare with the king of France. But his reign did not last much longer. One of the king's vassals found, on

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his estate, a large amount of treasure, part of which he sent to Richard, as his superior. The king, however, claimed the whole; and, when it was refused, proceeded to take it by force. He laid siege to the castle of Chalus in which it was kept: and one day, as he was superintending the works, an arrow, from the bow of an archer on the castle wall, pierced his shoulder. The wound was badly dressed, and proved fatal. In this manner died king Richard, who had raised high the fame and honour of his country, before an obscure castle, and by the hand of an obscure soldier.

Usurpation of king John.

Prince John immediately took possession of the crown. Richard had left it to his brother by will: but there was another claimant who ought to have succeeded him upon the throne. This was Arthur, the son of Geoffrey, the new king's elder brother. But John did not hesitate to add one wickedness to another. He had usurped the throne; and, in order to retain it, he caused his nephew, the rightful heir, to be murdered.

Loss of Normandy.

But it proved to him no easy post. He was weak in intellect, and of little energy, and his barons soon learned that he was not a person to be feared. Even his former friend, the king of France, turned against him, invaded Normandy, and alienated it from the English crown. The Norman lords had no dislike to this achievement: they admired the unscrupulous Philip more than the weak, faint-hearted John.

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Disputes with the clergy.

The king also quarrelled with his clergy, the cause of strife being the election of an Archbishop of Canterbury. The monks of that town had, on the death of Hubert, the last Archbishop, elected his successor. John did the same. Both appealed to the Pope who chose a third candidate instead of approving the choice of one of the rival parties. King John, however, refused to receive the Pope's nominee: and in consequence of his refusal the kingdom was placed under an interdict.

An interdict.

Englishmen, possessing the knowledge and the feelings of the present day can scarcely picture to themselves the horror of an interdict, or deprivation of the privileges of religion, in times, when the power of the clergy was very great, and the favour of the Romish Church was eagerly sought. When the sentence was fully carried into effect, all the churches were closed; all religious rites forbidden, except those of marriage and baptism; the images of the saints and all the church ornaments were taken from their places; and the sounds of merriment and joy were heard again no more.

John, however, was resolved to persevere in his dispute with the clergy, and dismissed those persons who attempted to obey the Pope's command: but Innocent the Third, who then filled the papal chair, was also fully resolved to proceed to extremities. He excommunicated the obstinate monarch; and the effect of this sentence was more

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severely felt by the king than the interdict. It affected him personally, for even his friends shunned his company.

Submission of John to the Pope.

The Pope, moreover, pretending to have the power to dethrone all sovereigns that refused submission to the Papal authority, proceeded to depose him, and to give his kingdom to Philip of France, who, assembling a well-equipped armament, prepared to invade the country which he coveted. But John was not utterly deserted. Full sixty thousand men obeyed his summons to resist the invader; and, if he had not distrusted their loyalty, he might have bidden defiance to the Pope, the king of France, and whosoever obeyed their will. His heart, however, failed him at the last moment, and he yielded to the wishes of the Pope. He resigned his crown to Pandulf, the Pope's legate or ambassador; he promised the most submissive obedience; and he paid a large sum of money as a proof of his good intentions. Pandulf behaved with great insolence, trampled the treasure under his feet, and shewed other signs of impertinence and contempt. Stephen Langton, the Archbishop named by the Pope, was welcomed by the king with affected cordiality: and Philip, angry and disappointed, turned his arms against Flanders.

Disputes with the barons.

Released from his conflict with the clergy, John employed himself in oppressing his people, and irritating his barons, in disputes with whom the latter years of his life were engaged. But discontented with his treatment of them, they rose in

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A. D. 1214.

rebellion; and, choosing one of their number, named Robert Fitzwalter, as their leader, waged war against their sovereign. Their successes were numerous and rapid. The citizens of London joined their party: and John was at length so terrified at their rapid progress and increasing power, that he agreed to come to terms with them. Runnymede, a large plain situated between Staines and Windsor, was named as the place of conference. The two parties encamped at a little distance from each other, and the principal leaders met at the appointed spot. There, in the midst of his armed and threatening barons, king John signed, according to their request, a charter which had been framed by the Archbishop of Canterbury upon the laws of king Edward the Confessor and of Henry the First.

Magna Charta. June 15th 1215.

This document is called Magna Charta. It proved a great benefit to the English people; it is the ground-work of their country's constitution, privileges, and liberties; and Englishmen of every succeeding generation have remembered with gratitude the boon which their ancestors won that day. It treated of the rights of the barons and free-men. Those of slaves, who, in after times, entirely disappeared from the face of the land, were alone disregarded. The nobles and their dependants were secured from oppressive fines; all free-men were allowed to enter and leave the Kingdom at pleasure; no tax, except on one

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or two occasions, was to be levied without the consent of the great council of the nation; merchants were protected; courts of justice were thrown open to all; and no free-man was to be tried for any offence, except by a jury of his equals.

Death of king John.

The appearance of force alone extorted these concessions from the king, who was exceedingly enraged at the degradation which he fancied that he had undergone. He kept in retirement for a time; and then proceeded again to make war upon his barons, who, being unprepared for his breaking his word so speedily, were unable to collect sufficient forces to oppose him. In this strait they applied to Louis, the elder son of the king of France, offered him the English crown, and induced him to join them in England with a French army. John did not, however, live to continue the warfare for his throne. As he was marching from Norfolk into Lincolnshire, he had to pass along the sea coast at low water; but the tide rose rapidly, and destroyed much of the baggage and provisions of his army. Vexation at this occurrence, and an intemperate meal, threw him into a fever, of which he soon afterwards died in the eighteenth year of his reign.

His character.

John was a bad king, and a bad man. There is not one good point in his character. He was an undutiful son, an ungrateful brother, and a tyrannical ruler. The three principal events of his reign shew the incapacity,

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the arrogance, and the oppressiveness of his nature. But they all issued in good to the country. The loss of territory in France increased the power and glory of England; the disputes with the Pope began to open the eyes of the people to the injustice of the Romish claims; and the rebellion of the nobles gave to Englishmen the charter of their freedom and their rights.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REIGNS OF HENRY THE THIRD AND EDWARD THE FIRST.

FROM A. D. 1216 TO A. D. 1307.

Accession of Henry the Third—The Earl of Pembroke, Regent—Henry's incapacity and favouritism—Discontent—The Mad Parliament—The king shares the government with the principal barons—Dissensions between them—Civil war—Simon De Montfort—Battle of Lewes—The king and Prince Edward taken prisoners—The Mise of Lewes—Leicester's government—Jealousy directed against Leicester—Prince Edward's escape—The battle of Evesham—Death of De Montfort—Wisdom of Prince Edward—He joins a crusade—Henry dies—His character—Prince Edward's tardy return—His welcome from his subjects—His fame in Palestine—Queen Eleanor's devotion to him--War against the Welsh--Conquest of the Welsh—Death of Llewellyn—Birth of the first Prince of Wales—War with Scotland—Competitors for the Scotch throne—Robert Bruce and Balliol—Edward claims allegiance from the Scotch—They rise against him—Partial conquest of Scotland—William Wallace—Rouses his countrymen—Petty warfare

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—Wallace defeats the English army—Is defeated at Falkirk—Continues the war—Is betrayed to death—Apparent tranquillity of Scotland—Robert Bruce—Edward advances to meet him—and dies—Edward's character—The evil—and the good of his reign.

Accession of Henry the Third.

HENRY, the son of the deceased king, was only nine years old, when his father died. The government was, therefore, placed in the hands of the Earl of Pembroke, a man of wisdom and courage, who expelled the French invader from the land, and restored it to a condition of peace and order.

His incapacity and favouritism.

When Henry came of age to govern for himself, he showed no signs of the intellect or strength necessary to maintain his power. He was a feeble king, and perfectly unfit to keep his unruly people under strict control. He married a lady named Eleanor of Provence, and disgusted his subjects by the preference which he shewed to her relations, and to other foreign favourites. The encouragement, however, which Henry gave to foreigners, while it annoyed his own people, was the means of increasing their knowledge and liberality and of introducing many useful arts and inventions into the country.

Discontent in the nation.

But the discontent increased. The king's extravagance brought him into difficulties, and he was obliged to ask the council of his chief barons, or rather his parliament, for supplies. The king and

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his nobles met at Oxford, where it was agreed that changes should be made in the government of the kingdom. It was to be placed in the hands of twenty-four persons, half of whom were to be appointed by the king, and half by the barons of the popular party. Four knights from each county, who were to be chosen by the free-men, were in future to form a portion of the parliament, and this arrangement laid the foundation of popular representation. The commons of England henceforward took a prominent share in the councils of the country. The king, and his son Prince Edward, who was now eighteen years of age, promised to observe the rules laid down by the parliament.

Attempts at accommodation.

But the prevailing confusion and discontent were not stilled. The king governed in conjunction with his barons for six years: but constant quarrels arose between them. Henry obtained from the Pope a release from his promise: but the barons would not listen to such an arrangement, and they would not submit to the feeble government which was certain to prevail, if he were left to govern by himself. Louis the Ninth, king of France, was desired to judge between the contending parties; but his decision was disregarded.

Contest between the barons and the king.

This state of affairs could not last. The disputes between the king's party and the people's party were to be settled by the sword. Many of the principal noblemen of the kingdom belonged to the latter; and, choosing Simon De Montfort, the

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Earl of Leicester, as their leader, made war upon the king. DeMontfort was a skilful general, and, in the first great battle, which was fought at Lewes in Sussex, he completely defeated the forces of the royalists. The king was taken prisoner, and Prince Edward, the principal supporter of his father's cause, surrendered on the following day.

The Government under Leicester.

The chief power in the land was now with Leicester. He ruled indeed in the name of the king, whose authority he pretended to respect: but Henry was only an instrument in his hands. During the time his authority continued, he did much good and much evil. The people generally looked upon him as a benefactor of his country, and we fully believe that he had the good of the nation at heart: but, at the same time, he used his power for personal purposes, in subduing his private enemies, and in carrying out the schemes which his ambition suggested.

The Mise of Lewes.

After the first decisive battle, a treaty, called the *Mise* of Lewes, was concluded. In this treaty it was stipulated that the rules of Magna Charta should be strictly observed, that no foreigner should bear office in the land, and that the king should be quiet and moderate in his expenses. Representatives from the cities and towns of England, as well as the knights of the shires, sat in the new Parliament which was at this time assembled, to take their share in the counsels of the king and the nobility.

Conspiracy against Leicester.

But the Earl of Leicester's popularity among the lower orders, and the great power which he

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possessed, provoked the jealousy of many of his former friends, and particularly of the Earls of Gloucester and Derby. The king and his brave son, Prince Edward, were, in reality, DeMontfort's prisoners. They appeared to be at liberty: but they were carefully watched, wheresoever they went, by Leicester's followers. The proud heart of Edward mourned over this constraint; and he readily entered into communication with the leaders of the forces which the royalists were secretly preparing.

Prince Edward's escape.

On a calm, clear morning in spring, a party of horsemen cantered along the open downs near Hereford to enjoy the invigorating air. One of them appeared too sad and ill to join in the races, with which the others amused themselves: but he looked on approvingly, and encouraged them in their sports. At length he seemed to enter into the amusement, and tried the speed of his horse with those of his companions. The animal he rode was fresh and swift. He won the race, but he did not return. The attendants madly galloped after him: but their horses were tired out, and they could not overtake the fugitive. The horseman was Prince Edward, and he was free.

He prepares to oppose Leicester.

As soon as he obtained his liberty, Edward joined the forces of the royalists, and put life and spirit into all their movements. Brave to a fault, generous and eager with the warmth of youth, and skilful in the art of war, he was no contemptible

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opponent to Leicester. That leader summoned his son, Simon, from London: but Edward attacked the advancing force, overcame it, and, displaying the banners he had taken from it in his own ranks, in order to deceive the enemy, approached to offer battle to Leicester who was then at Evesham.

The battle of Evesham. August 4th.

De Montfort at first mistook the approaching troops for his son's; but, as they drew near, he was undeceived, and he saw that his own small army was no match for the numerous forces to which it was opposed. "May the Lord have mercy upon our souls!" he exclaimed, "for our bodies are Prince Edward's." But he made a desperate resistance. Englishmen fought with Englishmen, and the battle was severe. De Montfort and most of his faithful followers were killed? and the royalist army was victorious. The old king, who, dressed in complete armour, was brought by Leicester into the battle, had a narrow escape. A soldier, not knowing who he was, raised his weapon to strike him. "Hold!" cried the unhappy monarch, "I am Henry of Winchester, your king": and the blow was stayed. Hearing of this event, Prince Edward hastened to his father, sheltered him in a place of safety, and returned to the thickest of the fight.

DeMontfort's character.

The death of De Montfort much as it was hailed by the nobility, was lamented by the commons. His name is spoken of with praise in the ballads

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of the time: and the good effect of his designs was shewn by the king and prince continuing to carry them out after the triumph of their cause. Prince Edward, wise in counsel as he was valiant in war, after restoring the authority of the crown, and gaining respect and love for himself, departed from his native land to join a fresh crusade to Palestine.

The death,

During his son's absence, the king returned, in a measure, to his former foolish conduct, and to give continued encouragement to vain and worthless favourites. He died on the 16th, of November 1272, after a long and troublous reign of fifty-six years.

and character of Henry the Third.

Henry the Third was a feeble monarch, and owing to his own carelessness and foolishness his reign was full of disasters. He was, however, a kind and affable man, a generous and forgiving sovereign, and an affectionate father. His son, who had always regarded him with great respect, was deeply moved by the tidings of his death.

Return of Prince Edward.

Edward was at the time in Savoy on his return from the Holy Land: but he did not shew any eager desire to assume the dignities of his new station. He remained abroad for about two years: but he had gained such a hold on the affections of the people, that no tumults or insurrections occurred during his absence, and, upon his arrival in England, he found the country in perfect peace and order.

His fame in Palestine.

He had acquired brilliant fame in Palestine, and had there maintained the respect for the English arms, which king Richard had inspired. His vigour, courage, and ability had made him so formidable to the Saracens, that they laid a plot against his life. He was stabbed by an assassin with a poisoned dagger: but his life was saved, it is said, by the devotion of Eleanor, his queen, who shewed her love to him by sucking the poison from the wound.

War against the Welsh.

Soon after his return, he entered into a war with the Welsh. This people were the descendants of the ancient Britons, who had taken refuge from the Saxons in the mountainous country to the west of England. They had been the occasion of constant quarrels with those who lived in the counties nearest them: and their own land was generally a scene of trouble and bloodshed. The Welsh king, Llewellyn, had assisted DeMontfort in the civil wars of the late reign; and king Edward resolved to make war upon him for not adhering to the terms of peace then made, to which he had agreed, and for refusing to pay homage for his territories. The conduct of the Welsh king suited Edward's plans of ambition, for he had long cherished an ardent desire to unite the whole island into one kingdom, under one ruler. He quickly triumphed over the brave, but undisciplined Welshmen, who were divided among themselves, David, the brother of Llewellyn, being one of the principal traitors to his king.

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Insurrections in Wales.

The Welshmen were subdued: but they remained quiet for only a short time. David returned to his allegiance; Llewellyn raised his standard again; and the bold mountainers gathered around them in defence of their country. But Edward was again victorious. The Welsh were posted in a strong position, where the English could attack them only by crossing a deep and rapid river by a narrow bridge. A traitorous Welshman, however, pointed out to Edward a ford by which he was enabled to cross the stream. Llewellyn was killed in the skirmish which ensued; his brother David was taken prisoner; and the Welsh were thoroughly defeated.

Ungenerous conduct of the king.

Edward exhibited a very bad spirit after the victory. He maltreated Llewellyn's body, and ordered David to be put to death as a traitor. We feel little sorrow for the latter: but the former merited better treatment from a generous foe. His only fault was, that he had fought too well for his country and his throne.

Subjugation of Wales.

Wales was completely conquered, and has, since that time, formed a portion of the English dominions: and the English king, in order to conciliate his new subjects, arranged that his queen, who was with child, should be confined at Caernarvon in the north of Wales. Edward the Second, his successor, was born there, and received the title of Prince of Wales, which has ever since been conferred upon the heir apparent of the English throne.

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Claimants for the Scottish crown.

After events led Edward to engage in a longer and fiercer war. Alexander, the reigning king of Scotland, with whom he was closely connected, and to whose grand-daughter his infant son was betrothed, was killed by an accidental fall; and Margaret, his grandchild, dying soon afterwards, the throne of Scotland fell vacant. It was immediately claimed by several nobles, the principal of whom were Robert Bruce and John Balliol. These two competitors agreed to submit their claims to the decision of Edward, who resolved to make the circumstance serve his own ambitious projects. He appointed a place of meeting in the north of England, when he decided in favour of Balliol, informing that prince that he expected to be acknowledged as the feudal lord of Scotland, and required homage to be paid to him for that country. He was not entitled to this acknowledgment; the former kings of Scotland, who had paid homage to the rulers of England, had done so, except in one instance, only for their possessions to the south of the Tweed, and not for their native land. But the new sovereign agreed to this proposal, thinking that the superiority thus claimed would exist only in name.

War in Scotland.

But he was mistaken. Edward treated him with great indignity and contempt, and irritated him to throw off the imposed yoke. Edward was, at the time, engaged in a quarrel with the French king; and an insurrection also occurred in Wales.

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He immediately put an end to his preparations against France; marched to Wales, and restored it to order; and then turned his steps towards Scotland. There he speedily triumphed. The Scotch were defeated near the town of Dunbar; their king surrendered, and their freedom was, for a season, taken from them. Edward, after receiving an abdication of the Scotch crown from Balliol, whom he kept in prison for three years, and after placing English garrisons in the principal towns of Scotland, returned to England with the full persuasion that he had conquered the country, and had completely secured it against revolt.

William Wallace.

But the Scotch were too noble and too high-hearted a people to submit. Their spirit might, for the time, be quelled: but it could not be crushed. In the year following, William Wallace, a private gentleman of Scotland, became the leader in a war against the English. He appears to have been a man of great courage and energy, full of enthusiasm and zeal, and exactly suited to lead his countrymen forward in success, and to cheer their spirits in reverse. He was at first assisted by a few only, whom the tyranny of the English governors, or love for their native land, had driven to despair. But his adherents gradually increased. His little band became an army, full of confidence and courage, although ill-disciplined and ill-armed. The first time he met the English, he gained a decided

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victory over them. The two hostile forces were on opposite sides of a deep river, which could only be passed by a narrow bridge. The English general, contrary to the advice that he had received, made his army cross by the bridge. Wallace waited until as many troops, as he could with safety encounter, had passed over, and then attacked them with superior numbers. Their companions could not come to their help, a river was in their rear, and they were entirely in the power of the Scotch. After this victory, Wallace marched into England: but Edward, who was, at the time, in Flanders, immediately returned to meet him. The English king was again triumphant; and defeated the Scotch army at Falkirk.

Betrayal and death of Wallace.

But the warfare did not end. Wallace, with constant perseverance, continued to annoy the English during the next four years, with the few faithful men who followed him in weal and woe. He was always on the alert, sometimes attacking the English at one point, and sometimes at another, and continually escaping from their pursuit, among the steep hills and the dense woods of his native land. He was at length betrayed by a traitor named Sir John Monteith, and delivered into the hands of king Edward, who had the barbarity to execute him, in the most cruel manner, as a common felon.

Scottish insurrection under Bruce.

Scotland now appeared tranquil and quiet: but again the warlike and ambitious king was disap-

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pointed. Robert Bruce, the grandson of a former claimant of the throne, started up to oppose him. Adherents quickly gathered to the Bruce's banner, and a very formidable army was raised to fight against the English. Edward once more marched to the north, after taking a solemn oath never to return, or to be completely victorious. His vow was accomplished, for he only lived to see the hills of Scotland in the distance. Thus died Edward the First, with his dearest wishes unfulfilled. He was a generous and open-hearted prince: but his wars against Wales and Scotland have cast an indelible stain upon his memory. A guilty ambition has clouded the noble qualities which we admired in his early years.

Characteristics of Edward the First's reign.

Good came, however, from the evil. The conquest of Wales was a blessing to that country and to England. Peace and quiet, instead of confusion and bloodshed, prevailed in Wales: and the neighbouring English countries were rendered prosperous and secure. But, if Edward erred in his foreign policy, he was happy in his government at home. He ruled fairly and equitably; he had a due regard to the interests of all his subjects; and he paid great attention to the laws of the land, many of the best of which had their origin in his reign.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REIGNS OF EDWARD THE SECOND AND EDWARD THE THIRD.

FROM A. D. 1307 TO A. D. 1377.

Edward the Second—His affection for Piers Gaveston—Uumannerly behaviour of the favourite—Gaveston's banishment,—return,—and death.—Reverses in Scotland—The battle of Bannockburn—Edward's relapse—The Despensers—Disturbances—Death of the Earl of Lancaster—Conduct of the queen and Mortimer—Fate of the Spencers—The king is taken prisoner—Is murdered—Accession of Edward the Third—Regency under the queen and Mortimer—Insurrections—Robert Bruce invades England—Peace with Scotland—The young king's marriage—The queen and Mortimer taken prisoners—Execution of the latter—The king assumes charge of the government—Another war with Scotland—Edward's claim to the throne of France—First invasion of France—Second invasion—Great naval victory—Third invasion—Campaign in Brittany—The Black Prince—The battle of Crecy—The siege of Calais—Heroic conduct of the garrison—Self devotion of St.

Pierre and his companions—Their lives are spared—Invasion of the Scotch—Queen Philippa's courageous bearing—The battle of Nevill's Cross—John ascends the French throne—Expedition into France under the Black Prince—The battle of Poictiers—John is taken prisoner—Unselfish behaviour of the Black Prince—Returns with his royal captive to London—Honorable conduct of the French king—The Black Prince's government at Bordeaux—Aids an exiled king of Spain—Troubles in the French possessions—The Black Prince dies—Edward's death—His character—Review of his reign.

THE reign of Edward the Second was a perfect contrast to that of his brave father. Immediately after his accession to the throne, he shewed his unfitness to rule. He left the army which his father had assembled to oppose the Scotch; concluded an inglorious peace with them; and hastened to his capital to enjoy the splendour and the luxuries of his new position. One of his first acts was to recall Piers Gaveston, a Gascon, to whom he was strongly attached, and who had been banished by Edward the First. The king gave himself completely up to the society of this unworthy favourite, who behaved with the greatest insolence to all the nobles of his sovereign's court. When Edward visited France to marry the daughter of Philip the Fair in the first year of his reign, he gave offence to all parties by appointing Gaveston regent of the

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kingdom during his absence. And, upon his return, he treated his favourite with such unmerited fondness that he lost the affections of his queen as well as of his subjects. At length the general discontent became so great, that he was obliged to send Gaveston into a nominal banishment to Ireland; but he recalled him within a year. Upon this the principal nobles took up arms against their sovereign under the Earl of Lancaster, a cousin of the king. Gaveston was taken prisoner; and, notwithstanding a promise of safety which he had received from the Earl of Pembroke who had captured him, he was barbarously murdered by order of the Earls of Lancaster and Warwick.

The Scotch regain their independence.

While this miserable mis-government was disgracing England, Robert Bruce was successful against the English arms in Scotland, and every English garrison was driven from that country, except those at Stirling, Berwick, and Dunbar. Edward now felt it was high time to put away foolish things, and to stay the course of his triumphant enemies. He assembled a large force in the north, and advanced towards the Scotch, and he came in sight of the Scotch army, as it was encamped upon the banks of the little river Bannock. The Scotch were far inferior in number to the English: but they were full of courage and confidence. Robert Bruce calmly awaited the advance of the English. His position was strong, and unfavourable to the English cavalry: and he made

The battle of Bannockburn. June 24th 1314.

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it stronger by digging pits in the front of his army, and concealing them with grass and bushes. The English were defeated. Their cavalry stumbled among the pitfalls, and were speedily routed. Their infantry fled in a panic, and were pursued for many miles by the victorious Scotch. Edward fought bravely: but he was obliged to flee with his followers. By the battle of Bannockburn, Scotland completely regained her independence, and Robert Bruce was firmly seated on the throne; but it took centuries to allay the evil feelings between England and Scotland, which the guilty ambition of Edward the First had fostered.

Foolish behaviour of the king.

After this short campaign, Edward returned to his former life of sloth and foolishness. He soon found a new favourite, whose name was De Spenser, and who behaved with almost as much insolence as Gaveston had done. Civil war was renewed; and to the evils which it brought upon the country, was added the misery of a severe famine. For a time the king's and the barons' parties were equal. The Earl of Lancaster, who was the leader of the latter, was taken prisoner, and was murdered at Pontefract by the king's orders, with as little compunction as he had shewn towards Gaveston.

The deposition and murder of Edward the Second.

But this act did not increase the popularity of the king, against whom even his own wife was in league. She had paid a visit to France to settle a dispute which had arisen with her brother, the French king, about Guienne; and she refused to return to

her neglectful husband. She was there joined by many of the rebellious and discontented nobles; and among them was Mortimer, a nobleman, with whom she is supposed to have been too intimate. When her party was sufficiently strong, she returned to England to make war against her husband and her king. Her adherents were many and powerful, and they were speedily successful. De Spenser's aged father, to whom the king had shewn much kindness for the favourite's sake, was taken prisoner at the castle of Bristol, and his grey hairs did not save him from an ignominious death; his son likewise was captured, and murdered; and the unhappy king, after trying in vain various places of refuge, was obliged to surrender. The parliament then proceeded formally to depose him. He was deeply affected, when he was informed of this fresh indignity: but he was forced to yield, and to resign all his power in favour of his youthful son. He was kept in captivity: and his treatment was, at first, kind and considerate. But the queen, Mortimer, and others of their party were not satisfied with any thing short of his death; and cruelty was added to his many miseries. He was removed from one place of confinement to another; he was denied the necessaries as well as the comforts of life; and he was at last murdered, at the dead of night, in a most painful and inhuman manner. In this awful manner ended a reign, which had every promise

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of prosperity at its beginning, but was rendered sad and troubled by the sovereign's thoughtlessness, levity, and self will.

Accession of Edward the Third.

When his father was murdered, Prince Edward was little more than fifteen years of age. The government was, for a time, in the hands of the queen and Mortimer, who used their power in a foolish and selfish manner. Great discontent was expressed at their conduct, and there were many insurrections: but the queen's party was still strong; the rebellion was quelled; and Edward's uncle, the Earl of Kent, was executed for the part he had borne in it.

Invasion of England by the Scotch.

The attention of the king and people was then turned to other matters. Robert Bruce, in revenge for the old wars, had marched an army into England, and had committed great ravages in the northern counties. The young king, early trained to feats of arms, set out to oppose him: but, although the English forces obliged the Scotch to retire from the country, no great action took place, and, after both parties had endured much fatigue from severe marches, peace was concluded.

Edward assumes the government.

In the following year Edward married the princess Philippa of Hainault, a beautiful and heroic lady: and, soon afterwards, feeling that he was of age to govern for himself, he resolved to take from his mother and Mortimer the power which they had abused. An opportunity for do-

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ing so soon occurred. They were staying at Nottingham Castle, the governor of which, being won over to Edward's cause, shewed him a subterranean passage into the castle. An armed party was thus admitted by night. Both Isabella and Mortimer were captured. The latter was condemned by the parliament, without even the form of a trial, and hanged; the former was detained, as a prisoner, in one of her own palaces; and Edward ruled henceforward in reality as well as in name.

The battle of Halidon Hill. July 19th 1333.

At this time he again went to the field of battle. Robert Bruce, the king of Scotland, was dead, and had been succeeded by his infant son. The son of Balliol, Bruce's former rival, claimed the throne, and was supported by Edward, who led an army into Scotland, defeated the Scotch at Halidon Hill, and imposed upon them a king against their will.

Edward's claim to the crown of France.

Edward now turned his mind to the execution of a long-cherished project. His mother was, as we have stated, the daughter of Philip the Fair, king of France. Her three brothers had all succeeded to the throne of that country, and had died leaving only daughters. Now there was a law in France, called the Salique Law, by which it was decreed that females could never sit upon the French throne, and the French nobility had shewn their approval of that law by prohibiting the daughter of those kings from reigning. The crown was, therefore, worn by the next male heir, Philip de Valois,

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the cousin of the last three sovereigns and of Isabella. Edward, however, claimed it for himself, affirming that, even if his mother could not inherit it, no objection ought to be made to her son, who was both able and willing to do so; and for this claim he was now about to contend with the sword.

Edward was entirely wrong. The nobles of France had a perfect right to chose their own king, and to confirm their own laws; even if his claims were good, there were male descendants of his uncles, who had a right to the throne before him; and he had, moreover, acknowledged Philip to be the lawful sovereign by paying homage for his possessions in France. But his ambition hurried him into an unjust war.

First invasion of France.

Many of the continental states, especially those to the north of France, were friendly to his cause and, in the spring of 1338, he landed in Flanders, and invaded France from that quarter. The expedition, however, resulted in nothing but idle parade and wanton cruelty. He laid waste the northern frontiers of France; but his allies dropping off, and his supplies failing, he was obliged to withdraw without gaining any advantage.

Naval victory of Sluys.

In 1340 he prepared for a second invasion: but Philip, hearing of his intentions, collected an enormous fleet to oppose him, which was drawn up in line of battle off Sluys. The English fleet, though far inferior in number, bore down upon the enemy. A severe engagement ensued: but

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Edward, animating his men by his own personal valour, gained a complete victory. Four hundred of the French ships were sunk, and, it is said, 30,000 of the Frenchmen slain. Having thus overcome the obstacles in the way of his landing, he advanced unopposed to Tournay to which he laid siege: but he was unable to take that town, and was obliged to enter into a truce with Philip who came up to its rescue. After his return to England, he was engaged, for a time, in disputes with his parliament about the supplies, which he required for his foreign wars.

Third invasion of France.

A third campaign ensued. Quarrels arose about the succession to the Duchy of Brittany; and Edward, eagerly availing himself of them, took the opposite side to the king of France, although it was in exact opposition to his own claims upon the French throne. De Montfort, whose cause Edward espoused, was taken prisoner and slain: but his widow was closely besieged in Hennebonne which she defended with the most heroic gallantry. Edward immediately sent to her aid Sir Walter Manny, one of his bravest knights; a diversion was made farther south, from Guienne, where the Earl of Derby highly distinguished himself; and the king himself made a descent upon the coast of Normandy. He landed there with his compact little army of archers, and bill-men, and his train of brilliant knights, on the 12th of July, 1346. Advancing inland, he allowed his soldiers to com-

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mit every kind of havoc and outrage whithersoever they went: but as he drew near Paris, Philip, with the bravest of his brave followers, came forth to oppose him. Finding himself in danger of being surrounded, and cut off in an enemy's country, Edward retreated, and, with admirable generalship, avoided the French king's pursuit, until he reached the river Somme, where his army was placed in an awkward position. Before him was a deep and rapid river, and behind him a force of 100,000 men, which could engage him with advantage in his present situation. At length a traitorous Frenchman was induced, by the promise of reward, to shew him a ford, which he passed in the face of a strong detachment of the enemy. No sooner had his rear-guard crossed, than the French army appeared. But the tide had risen to such a height that king Philip was unable to continue the pursuit, and he was obliged to cross the river by a bridge at Abbeville which was at some distance.

The battle of Crecy. August 26th.

Edward, relieved from the impending danger, proceeded leisurely, looking about for a suitable place, where he might offer battle to his adversary. At length he approached Crecy, where he drew up his army on a gentle slope before the village. It was divided into three lines, the first of which was commanded by the Black Prince, Edward's brave and noble son. When the preparations for battle were concluded, the king rode along the ranks, and, with a cheerful, smiling face, encourag-

ed every man within them to fight for him and England. After seeing that all were ready, he bade them sit down upon the grass and refresh themselves, until the foe appeared.

At length Philip, all eager in pursuit, drew near: but, wishing to give his troops rest before they engaged, he ordered them to halt. They could not and would not obey. The rear ranks of the huge host urged on the vanguard, and the foremost dashed onward in a courageous, but disorderly manner. A band of Genoese archers began the battle. A shower of rain had injured their bows, and the sun, suddenly breaking forth from the dark clouds, dazzled their eyes. Their aim was uncertain, and their arrows fell short. The English had, however, kept their weapons in the cases until the last moment; and now every man, calm and self collected, discharged an arrow against the advancing foe with such deadly effect that "the arrows fell," says an old writer, "like a fall of snow." The Genoese turned and fled in dismay and hindered the advance of the army: but the French knights pressed on, cutting down every fugitive they met. At length the strong men of France were free: and with impetuosity, bravery, and spirit engaged the first line of the English. The struggle was sharp and fierce. The young Black Prince greatly distinguished himself by his daring deeds. More of the enemy gathered around him and his brave men: and a mes-

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senger was sent to Edward for aid. The king was on the summit of a neighbouring hill, from which he was looking at the conflict. "Is my son alive?" was his answer to the messenger "Oh, yes, sire; but sore pressed." "Back, then;" was the reply, "back: tell him that the honour of the day is to be his. He must win his golden spurs." These words gave new life to all. With shouts of triumph and songs of joy, they drove the Frenchmen back; and, ere the sun set, the victory was complete. Great had been the courage of the English: but it was sullied by foul cruelty. Almost every enemy was slain; no quarter was given; no prisoners taken.

The siege of Calais.

After remaining a short time at Crecy, Edward laid siege to the strong fortress of Calais which was considered the key to France. The siege was long and tedious: but after a blockade of eleven months, the garrison was reduced to extreme need; they were obliged to live on the vilest food; and at length necessity compelled them to surrender. They asked Edward to let them depart from the town with the honours of war. The king would not at first listen to their proposal, and when he did agree to it, it was upon the condition that six of the principal citizens should bring him the keys of the town, with their heads and feet bare, and halters round their necks. There was grief and heaviness of heart in Calais, when this determination was made known: but a brave, unselfish

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man, named Eustace de St. Pierre, offered his life, as a ransom for the rest, and his example encouraged five others to the same self-sacrifice. Bareheaded and barefooted, they left the city for the English camp, and all their fellow-citizens were suffered to depart in peace. Edward actually resolved to take away the lives of those six noble-hearted men: but Queen Philippa, who had lately joined him, fell upon her knees before him; prevailed upon him to spare their lives; and treated them in the kind and generous manner they deserved.

Queen Philippa's courage.

While Edward was engaged in the French war, the Scotch had invaded England. Queen Philippa, who was as brave as she was tender-hearted, quickly collected a force sufficient to oppose them, and defeated them at Nevill's Cross. Until the last moment before the engagement, she was with the army, riding along the ranks and encouraging her soldiers: and she had arrived to inform her husband of the good news a short time only before the surrender of Calais.

For the next few years, the war was carried on with less vigour. Edward and his son were in England which was grievously afflicted by a fearful plague. In France king Philip died, and was succeeded by his son, John.

The Black Prince invades France.

During the year 1356, however, another grand expedition against France was undertaken by the Black Prince. Advancing from Bordeaux, he penetrated

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into the heart of the land, until he reached Poictiers, and allowed his soldiers to plunder every town and village on their way. But king John came out to meet him with all the best and bravest knights of France, who longed to avenge the cruelties committed in their own loved land. The English were obliged to retreat: but the French were more rapid than they; and the Black Prince, seeing that an honourable retreat was impracticable, prepared for battle with cheerful determination. For some little time, there were hopes of a truce: but the French king would hear of nothing, save the unconditional surrender of the prince and a hundred of his knights. The English leader replied, that he should never be taken prisoner, except with his sword in his hand.

The battle of Poictiers. Sept. 19th.

The small party of English was posted most judiciously in a strong position which was surrounded by vineyards and hedges. A steep and narrow lane ran through their centre; and on one side there was a small hill, on which a few chosen knights were stationed, ready to take advantage of any disorder in the ranks of the enemy. The French advanced to the attack by the lane. They came on eagerly and rapidly: but the English bowmen, safely posted behind the hedges, discharged their arrows with fatal precision against the Frenchmen, who, wounded and unable to strike in return, were soon put to confusion. Part of the advancing ranks wavered and fled; and then the chosen English

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knights rushed down upon the disordered array. The French king and those around him fought bravely and desperately; but they were overpowered and taken prisoners. The Black Prince had retired to his tent to refresh himself after the fatigues of the day, when king John and his youngest son were conducted to him. He immediately rose to receive the royal captive, and spoke to him a few kind words of praise and condolence. When supper was served, he would not sit down to it, but stood behind the king and waited upon him with every token of respect. King John owned himself to be conquered indeed, as he gratefully thanked the gentle prince for this unexpected kindness.

Courteous behaviour of the Black Prince.

The Black Prince retired to Bordeaux. Soon afterwards he arrived in England, where his courtesy and lowliness shone as conspicuously as at Poictiers. Crowds came out to meet and congratulate him, as he approached London. They found him riding a small black pony by the side of his prisoner and guest, who was seated on a noble charger. King John was most kindly treated by Edward; and was set at liberty on his offering to find forty knights to be detained as security for his ransom, and to resign some of the provinces of France to the conqueror. Actually forty loyal, unselfish men could not be found in all France to give themselves up for a time to rescue their sovereign; and king John possessed so deep a sense of hon-

CHAP. IX. A. D. 1357. our that he returned to England, as a captive, rather than break his word. He died there in the following year.

War in Spain. The government of the ceded provinces was entrusted to the Black Prince, who held his court in the city of Bordeaux. The armies of France and England being relieved from war, large bands of wild, unprincipled men from both parties, who called themselves the free companies, committed all manner of outrage and excess in the former country: and the French king, at the suggestion of Du Guesclin, one of his most chivalrous warriors, induced them to enter into the service of Henry Trastamare, an illegitimate brother of Pedro the Cruel, king of Castile in Spain, against whom he had made war. He was successful; but only for a time. Pedro, the dethroned king, sought the help of the Black Prince, who willingly afforded it, for he thought that Pedro's cause was just. The English, under their loved leader, were victorious over a large number of the enemy: but Pedro was a thoroughly bad man, and shewed his ingratitude by refusing all reward and supplies to those who replaced him on his throne, and to the Black Prince, who had sacrificed health and fame on his behalf. An illness contracted in Spain enfeebled the Prince: and a tax, imposed upon his French subjects for the expenses of the war, caused them to revolt against him. His provinces were wrested from him, and he returned

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to his native land to die. His father, worn by age and grief, and utterly in his dotage, did not survive him a year. The helplessness of childhood returned to the king in his latter years: and the management of affairs was taken out of his hands by the Parliament.

Characteristics of Edward's reign.

Edward was the greatest monarch of his time. Brave, honourable, and enthusiastic, but ambitious, hasty, and often cruel, his character was a strange mixture of good and evil. He and his son were the true models of their age; and even their ruthlessness in war and their eager ambition are softened by the chivalrous splendour of the times, which they so faithfully reflected. The reign of Edward the Third is the most brilliant in the history of England during the middle ages. The English soldiers were victorious over all their foes; the navy was irresistible; the laws of the nation were strengthened and improved; commerce was extended; the prose literature of England took its rise; the harp of Chaucer uttered its first sweet notes of song; and John Wickliffe, in trumpet tones, aroused the land to freedom of thought in religion, boldly denounced the leading errors of the Romish faith, and laid the first stones of the fabric of the Reformation.

CHAPTER X.

RICHARD THE SECOND'S UNHAPPY REIGN, AND THE USURPATION OF HENRY THE FOURTH.

FROM A. D. 1377 TO A. D. 1413.

Richard the Second's minority—Poll-tax—Servile insurrection—The king's favourites—Civil commotions—The Duke of Gloucester—Power taken from the king—Impeachment and execution of his ministers—Richard regains power—Peace and alliance with France—Cabals of Gloucester—His trial and murder—The quarrel between the Dukes of Norfolk and Hereford—They are both exiled—Lancaster's death—Confiscation of his estates—Henry of Lancaster returns—Richard's expedition to Ireland—Henry's insurrection—Richard returns from Ireland—His resignation, deposition, and murder—Henry the Fourth's reign—Insurrections—Owen Glendower—The Earl of March taken prisoner—War with Scotland—Insurrection under the Duke of Northumberland—The battle of Shrewsbury—Henry's unpopularity—The king's illness and death—Growth of the reformed faith.

RICHARD, the only son of the Black Prince, succeeded his grandfather, with the title of Ri-

chard the Second. The people were delighted at his accession. He was the son of the beloved Black Prince who had been the favourite of the nation; although he was very young, he had a pleasing and manly demeanour; and he would, it was hoped, emulate the warlike actions of his father and grandfather.

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Minority of the king.

As he was scarcely eleven years of age when he became king, the government of the country was placed, during his minority, in the hands of his three uncles, afterwards the Dukes of Lancaster, Gloucester, and York, with whom some of the chief noblemen of the kingdom were associated. The nation was still at war with France and Scotland: but the warfare was carried on in a listless and feeble manner, and several disasters happened to the English forces. English troops were also employed in Spain, in support of the Dukes of Lancaster and York, who laid claim to the throne of Castile, on account of marriages which they had contracted with princesses of that country.

The poll-tax.

It was soon found necessary to obtain money for the prosecution of these wars; and the Houses of Parliament consented to revive a poll-tax, which had been levied for a short time during the latter part of king Edward's reign. The poll-tax was a tribute of three groats, or about half a rupee in the currency of India, for every person, whether male or female, who was above fifteen

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years of age. It pressed equally upon the rich and upon the poor, and was, consequently, very unpopular among the lower orders. It was, moreover, farmed out to a few wealthy and unscrupulous persons, who, being anxious to make as much profit out of it as they possibly could, were very rigorous in their demands, and often behaved in an exceedingly uncourteous manner towards the poor.

A servile insurrection.

Disgusted at this uneven tax, and at the ill-treatment to which they were frequently subjected on account of it, the lower classes broke into open rebellion. The insurrection began in several places at once: but the greatest disturbance arose in Kent. The daughter of a tyler at Dartford was ill-treated by one of the tax-collectors, and her father, in a fit of passion, slew the man upon the spot. The mob which gathered around him elected him as their leader. It quickly increased, and soon amounted to many hundreds of men, who were desirous of revenge for the insults which they had imagined or endured. With Wat Tyler at their head, they advanced to London, whither similar mobs were hastening, plundering the higher classes on their way, and maltreating every gentleman whom they met. When they drew near London, they insisted upon seeing the king, in order to inform him of their grievances: but Richard was dissuaded by his attendants from acceding, at first, to their request.

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For a few hours London was in a disgraceful state of anarchy and riot. Many of the finest mansions were plundered and burnt; the Tower of London was attacked; the Archbishop of Canterbury was murdered; every gentleman and every foreigner that appeared in the roads was assaulted; and the streets were full of wild, uproarious men, intent on the work of destruction, or of rioters who were lying on the ground, stupified by the liquor they had drunk.

Anarchy in London.

While these scenes were being enacted, the king met a party of the rioters near London, pacified them with promises of redress, and bestowed charters of freedom upon all those who had hitherto been in bondage. Satisfied with these assurances, many of the rebels departed to their homes.

Courage and address of the young king.

Upon the following day, Richard, attended by Sir William Walworth, who was Lord Mayor, and by some of his courtiers, rode to Smithfield for an interview with Wat Tyler and the insurgents that still remained. As soon as the king arrived, Wat Tyler advanced towards him in an impudent and menacing manner which so exasperated Sir William Walworth, that he struck the rebel to the ground. The king and his party were in great peril, for the mob, enraged at the loss of their leader, were pressing forward, with their bows bent, to avenge his death. Richard, however, rode towards

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them, and, with great self-possession, addressed the angry crowd. "What, my people," he exclaimed, "will you kill your king? Tyler was a traitor. Follow me, and *I* will be your leader." Awed, charmed, and quieted, the rioters obeyed; and followed their young king to an open place near Islington, where he gave them the same assurances of redress, which he had before expressed to their companions. Troops had, by this time, assembled; but Richard would not permit them to attack the ill-armed multitude, who, conciliated by his manner and promises, dispersed in order, and returned peaceably to their homes. The charters which the king had granted were, however, revoked by the Houses of Parliament; and this act greatly contributed to lower the popularity which he had previously acquired.

The king's marriage.

At the time of this insurrection king Richard was sixteen years of age, and was approaching the period, when he would be able to assume charge of the government. While yet young, he married the Princess Anne of Bohemia who, on account of her singular gentleness and courtesy, received from the people the name of the good Queen Anne.

Favouritism.

The king did not, however, advance in wisdom, as he advanced in years. He adopted the evil custom of shewing particular attention to favour-

ites, a course which had proved fatal to his ancestor, king Edward the Second. His principal favourite was Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, whom he created, in the first instance, Marquis of Dublin, and, afterwards, Duke of Ireland. This conduct occasioned great discontent, especially among the nobility: and the Duke of Gloucester, who was the chief person in charge of the government, as the Duke of Lancaster was absent in Castile, took advantage of this feeling to create a party against the king. Richard was deprived of all power by this party: his ministers and judges were condemned; most of them were degraded from office; and many of them executed.

Richard assumes charge of the government.

About a year after these events, however, Richard took energetic measures to acquire power. He dismissed his council, and assumed charge of the government. A short season of tranquillity succeeded this proceeding, but the Duke of Gloucester and other nobles of his party continued their intrigues. The king, aware of the plots which were being made against him, determined to secure himself from further annoyance on the part of his uncle; and he carried out his design in so treacherous a manner as to ensure the dislike of his people and the condemnation of posterity. While he was paying a friendly visit to the Duke of Gloucester, he caused his host to be seized, and imprisoned in the fortress at Calais.

Arrest and death of Gloucester.

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The Duke died there, and it is supposed that he was murdered by order of his unprincipled nephew.

Popular discontents.

Before the Duke of Gloucester's murder, Richard had concluded a peace with France, and, the good Queen Anne being dead, contracted a marriage with the daughter of the French sovereign, both of which events were distasteful to the English people, and served to increase the unpopularity of the king. During this season of suppressed ill-feeling, Henry Bolingbroke, the Duke of Hereford, publicly accused the Duke of Norfolk of having held a conversation, in which he used several expressions against the king. The Duke of Norfolk indignantly denied the accusation, and defied Henry to prove his charges by single combat. The Duke of Hereford accepting this challenge, the king arranged that an encounter should take place between the parties at Coventry: but, when everything was prepared, Richard, to the great mortification of all present, forbad the duel, and banished both of the combatants from the kingdom. He exiled the Duke of Norfolk for life, and the Duke of Hereford for ten years. The latter was permitted to retain his property, and to inherit the estates of his father, the Duke of Lancaster.

Quarrel between the Dukes of Hereford and Norfolk.

Death of the Duke of Lan-

In a few months, however, the Duke of Lancaster died; and Richard seized all his estates,

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appropriated them to the crown, and decreed that the banishment of Henry, now the Duke of Lancaster, should be perpetual. Having rendered himself very disagreeable to his subjects by many other tyrannical acts of a similar nature, he made an expedition into Ireland in order to quell an insurrection which had lately broken out in that country.

caster, and the confiscation of his estates.

Return of Henry Bolingbroke.

Meanwhile Henry of Lancaster, enraged at the unjust treatment which he had experienced, returned to England with the intention of claiming his father's estates; and, on landing in Yorkshire, found himself well received by the people, and supported by the powerful Earl of Northumberland and other noblemen who had suffered from the tyranny of the king. He asserted at first that he had only come to claim his rights: but, seeing the strength of his adherents and the rejoicings with which the people greeted him, he openly aspired to the crown. The Duke of York, who was regent during Richard's absence, was won over to his side; the king's troops joined him in large numbers; and the populace rose in his favour.

Captivity and deposition of Richard.

Richard, as soon as he heard of these stirring events, returned from Ireland: but only to find that his cause was hopeless. Abandoned by his people and his troops, he was compelled to seek an interview with the Duke of Lancaster, who de-

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taining him in a real though an easy captivity, proposed to assist him in governing the kingdom. Upon the meeting of Parliament, however, the unhappy king was forced to resign his crown, which, at the request of that assembly, the Duke of Lancaster assumed. The Parliament had no right to offer, nor Henry to accept, the title of king; for, after the deposition of Richard, the lawful claimant to the throne was Edmund, Earl of March, a descendant of the Duke of Clarence, king Edward's third son. This usurpation subsequently led to the wars of the Roses.

The murder of Richard the Second.

The remainder of the deposed monarch's life was spent in imprisonment. He was murdered in the Castle of Pontefract by the order of the new king, who, with unfeeling policy, paraded the corpse through the streets of London to convince the people that their late sovereign was indeed dead. Such was the miserable end of one whose reign had begun with the most cheerful prospects. Weak, dissolute, and tyrannical, he brought calamities upon his own head: "his follies fought against himself."

Early portion of Henry the Fourth's reign.

Henry the Fourth's reign was a short and an unhappy one. He gained the crown by usurpation and violence, and he found the possession of it painful and troublesome. During the first years of his reign several tumults and revolts occurred. The earliest was a plot to take him prisoner and to

restore the captive king. It was laid by the Earls of Salisbury and Huntingdon: but the king, being informed of their design, saved his life by quitting Windsor Castle, where he had been residing, and where the project was to have been put into execution.

CHAP. X. A.D. 1400.

Insurrection under Owen Glendower.

A more formidable insurrection soon afterwards took place in Wales. Owen Glendower, a Welshman, who was very popular among his countrymen, had entered the service of the last sovereign, and had held a distinguished place in the royal household. Soon after the accession of Henry the Fourth, disputes arose between this gentleman and Lord Grey de Ruthven, a powerful nobleman who had estates in Wales, and who, not content with them, coveted the possessions of his neighbour, Owen Glendower. Glendower, indignant at the treatment which he had experienced from Lord Ruthven, summoned the Welsh to arms. A long and harassing warfare ensued. Henry assisted the English lord, in consequence of the well-known attachment of Glendower to the late king. Owen Glendower was well-defended by his countrymen, who, amidst the rugged hills and secure fastnesses of their mountainous land, resisted all the attacks of Henry. Predatory warfare was carried into the neighbouring counties of England; and, in one of these forays, the young Earl of March, the rightful heir to the English throne, was captured by Owen Glendower, from whose power Henry,

CHAP. X. A. D. 1402.

pleased at getting rid of his rival, made no efforts to release him.

Invasion and defeat of Douglas.

Meanwhile the king conducted an expedition against the Scotch, and, in the following year, the Scotch, in retaliation, invaded the northern counties of England under Lord Douglas, a gallant and warlike chief. The Duke of Northumberland, and his brave son Harry Hotspur, opposed them, defeated them thoroughly, and captured their renowned commander.

Disgust and rebellion of the Duke of Northumberland.

Henry demanded that all the prisoners who had been taken in the action should be placed under his charge, and forbad the victors to receive any ransom upon their account. An ill-feeling had, before this occurrence, sprung up between the Duke of Northumberland and the king. The former thought that he had been slighted: and the latter was jealous of the powerful nobleman, who had materially assisted in raising him to the throne. At this time they came to an open rupture. The Duke of Northumberland broke into rebellion, and sent his son toward the south with a large force in which Douglas, now thoroughly reconciled to his former foes, was one of the most conspicuous warriors.

The battle of Shrewsbury.

July 21st 1403.

Henry the Fourth met this army at Shrewsbury. Northumberland was to have followed his son: but Harry Hotspur, over eager and impetuous, would not defer the engagement until his

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arrival. The battle was peculiarly fierce and stubborn. On the one side king Henry, and his eldest son, henceforward noted for deeds of valour, fought bravely: on the other Harry Hotspur and Douglas emulated each other's gallantry. Both eagerly sought the king, with the intention of bringing the action to an issue by a single combat. But Harry Percy was slain, and his followers, at length, gave way.

Henry's unpopularity.

The well-contested battle of Shrewsbury seated Henry firmly on the throne, and, with the exception of a slight outbreak with which the Archbishop of York was concerned, put an end to plots and insurrections. But he ruled by fear, and not by love. The rejoicings that hailed his accession were heard no more, for the people endured, but could not love, his rule.

The latter days of Henry the Fourth.

Two years before his death, he experienced a severe attack from a disease to which he had been long subject, and a leprosy, breaking out on his face, enfeebled him to such a degree that he was scarcely able to transact business. The state of debility into which the king had fallen induced the Prince of Wales to demand his father's resignation, and occasioned unhappy dissensions between the parent and son.

His death.

Henry died in the fourteenth year of his reign. He exhibited during the latter portion of his life a melancholy instance of the sorrows endured by

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those who have unjustly gained the highest objects of their ambition. Possessed of a superior intellect and of pleasing manners, he yet failed to win the affection of his people, or to be of any service to his country.

Growth of the reformed faith in England.

During both of the preceding reigns, the doctrines of Scripture continued to increase in favour with the nation, and many embraced the pure and healthy precepts which it enforces. During Richard the Second's reign, Wickliffe attacked the corruptions of the prevailing form of faith; and employed himself, in his quiet retreat at Lutterworth, in translating the Book of Life into the English tongue, so that all who pleased might judge for themselves whether his renderings of divine truth were accurate or not. Many of his followers travelled through the country with portions of the sacred volume in their hands, and read it to the more ignorant of their fellow countrymen. They received the name of Lollards in token of derision, and they were frequently persecuted for their faith: but their doctrines, though ridiculed by most of the people, sank into the hearts of many, and flourished, in spite of persecution and in the midst of civil war, until, in a subsequent reign, the Church of England was set in order.

CHAPTER XI.

WAR WITH FRANCE.

From A. D. 1413 to A. D. 1450.

Accession of Henry the Fifth—His respect to the memory of Richard—Persecution of the Lollards—The condition of France—Henry lays claim to the throne of France—Conspiracy against the king—The invasion of France—The English march towards Calais—A French army opposes them—The battle of Agincourt—The march to Calais, and return to England—Continuation of civil war in France—The English and Burgundian alliance—Death of Henry the Fifth—Accession of Henry the Sixth—Arrangements with regard to the government of England and France—Warfare against the Dauphin and his followers—The siege of Orleans—The battle of herrings—Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans—Proceeds to meet Charles at Chinon—Goes to Orleans—Her entry into that city—The English raise the siege—Progress of Charles to Rheims—His coronation—Captivity, trial, and death of Joan of Arc—Reverses of the English in France—They abandon the country.

The accession of Henry the Fifth to the throne was exceedingly pleasing to the nation. In his

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youth he had been wild and foolish: but he had shewn such extraordinary courage on the battle field, and such great skill in military affairs, that the people looked forward to his reign, which would, they hoped, be fruitful in warlike and exciting events. Nor were they disappointed. Immediately Henry became king, he separated from his vain and foolish companions, and took counsel from those old and faithful ministers who had served his father. His behaviour had not been, in all probability, so bad as is popularly supposed: but, nevertheless, he was, when Prince of Wales, guilty of undutiful conduct towards his father and of thoughtless levity; and, upon his becoming king, he exhibited a rare instance of firmness and self-restraint.

Pays respect to the memory of Richard the Second.

One of his first acts was to exhume the body of king Richard the Second who had, during the time of his boyhood, shewn him kindness, and to bury it with every mark of honour and respect in Westminster Abbey. He also invited to his court the Earl of March, to whom he showed such uniform kindness and attention, that the Earl was henceforward one of his firmest and most steadfast friends.

Persecution of the Lollards.

The beginning of his reign was disfigured by a persecution of the Lollards. Lord Cobham, an upright and conscientious nobleman, having adopted their opinions, was tried and condemned to death: but he escaped from the Tower,

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and found concealment, sometimes in the mountains of Wales, and sometimes among his own tenantry. He was, a few years afterwards, apprehended, and executed for supposed treason. It was pretended that several Lollards had, under his guidance, entered into a conspiracy against the king. A few of them had, indeed, assembled near London in the hope of meeting Lord Cobham, and they were unjustly put to death for their connection with the apprehended tumult.

The condition of France.

The reign of Henry the Fifth is, however, principally distinguished for his wars against France. That country was in an unhappy condition. The French king was subject to a disease which, reducing him, from time to time, to a state of idiocy, disabled him from managing the affairs of state: and there were two parties in the kingdom, one of which desired to see the Duke of Burgundy, and the other desired to see the Duke of Orleans, assume charge of the government, during each successive illness of the king. The contending factions were very bitter against each other, and this bitterness was increased by an act of perfidy on the part of the Duke of Burgundy. Agreeing to forget his differences with the Duke of Orleans, he swore friendship with that nobleman: but, soon after taking the oath, he procured the assassination of his rival in the streets of Paris. The quarrel was inflamed by this base treachery, and the nation was more thoroughly than ever divided

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between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs, as the party of the young Duke of Orleans, the murdered man's son, was called.

Henry lays claim to the throne of France.

The ambition of the English king induced him, at this time, to renew the claims which Edward the Third had advanced to the crown of France. Offers of accommodation were made by the French, but Henry's demands were high, and the negotiations were broken off. Meanwhile a formidable armament was assembling at Southampton: but, while most of the knights and soldiers of England, delighted at the idea of war with their ancient enemy, were hastening to the standard of the king, many of the highest noblemen in the land were engaged in a conspiracy against him. The Earl of Cambridge was the chief offender, and the object of the plot was the elevation of the Earl of March, who was however himself unconnected with the insurrection. The ringleaders were apprehended and executed, and the king was again free to sail for France. His cause was unjust, but he was fully impressed with the belief that he was right.

Conspiracy against the king.

The invasion of France,

He landed near Harfleur, to which town he laid siege. The attack was vigorous, and the defence gallant: but the garrison, being deprived of all succour, was obliged to surrender. This victory was, however, useless to Henry, for disease spread among the English troops as they were encamped before Harfleur, and he found himself

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accompanied by so reduced a force, that he was unable to continue his expedition. Being thus under the necessity of returning to England, his bold spirit spurned the idea of retreat by the way which he had come. He resolved, therefore, to march to Calais, which was only a hundred miles from Harfleur, and to re-embark at that port. He anticipated a battle: but, trusting to the courage of his men, he looked forward to certain victory.

The English march towards Calais.

His march was, for some distance, unopposed; but the whole strength and chivalry of France were preparing to give him battle. He desired to cross the river Somme, at the place where Edward the Third, when similarly situated, passed it: but every ford and every bridge was guarded. Finding his march thus impeded, he resolved to go round the river at its source. On the road, however, a neglected ford was discovered by which he was enabled to cross, and was saved a long and wearisome journey through the heart of an enemy's country.

A French army assembles to oppose them.

The French, army which numbered more than a hundred thousand men, commanded by the wisest leaders and the bravest knights in France, had been assembled, and was drawn up between the English army and Calais. An action was inevitable, and the small, brave English army prepared, with undaunted resolution, to engage their numerous foes. On the evening

CHAP. XI. A. D. 1415. of the 24th of October, they drew near the enemy, who was encamped near a place named Agincourt. The hostile forces passed the night quite close to each other. The French, exulting and confident in their numbers, were full of noise and mirth: but there was silence in the English camp—the silence of despair, for they knew that, on the morrow, they were to contend for victory or death.

The battle of Agincourt. Oct. 25th. As the morning dawned, both armies drew up in battle array. The French in three divisions: the English in one compact body. Upon either flank of the English army there was a thick wood, which compelled the enemy to attack them in the front. A small village was in the rear, where the baggage and horses were placed. When the arrangement of the army was completed, the king, mounted on a handsome white charger, and wearing a brilliant helmet surrounded by a crown of jewels and of gold, rode along the ranks, and, in a cheerful tone, exhorted his followers to be true and brave.

The attack. Both armies remained inactive for a time, the English leader being unwilling to move from his favourable position, and the French being restrained by their commanders. Henry began the engagement by a skilful manœuvre. He ordered an advance; and, when the French rushed impetuously forward to the attack, directed the advancing parties to return. Nothing, however, could now restrain the French troops. They were irrevocably engaged with the English, who, after retreat-

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ing slowly to their former position, stood still and awaited the attack. Each soldier held in his hand a long stake which, as the enemy approached, he planted firmly in the ground, and occupied a position behind it. The French attempted to pass this formidable barrier : but most of them were mounted, and their horses were killed or wounded by the stakes, while the English archers, with true, unerring aim, poured volley after volley of arrows into the confused ranks. Again and again the charge was repeated; again and again it was repulsed by the stakes and the deadly arrows. There was only one place and one mode of attack, and the great numbers of the French army were of no avail.

Danger of the king, and devotion of David Gam.

King Henry was in the thickest of the fight. At one time he was in great danger, as eighteen French knights had entered into a league with each other that they would single out the English king, as the only object of their attack. A Welshman named David Gam and two of his countrymen defended their master at the sacrifice of their lives : and, in reward of their devotion, Henry knighted them, as they lay bleeding to death at his feet.

The victory.

At length the foremost line of the French army gave way and was followed by the conquerors. This advance brought the English in contact with the second line with which the struggle was re-

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newed. It was at one time so fierce that the file of the slain exceeded the height of a man, and, from behind that awful barrier, the English archers discharged their arrows. A charge made by some of the English horsemen, who had been held in reserve, completed the defeat of the second line and of the French army.

Retreat of the French.

The exhausted conquerors were unable to pursue the enemy, after the fearful struggle which they had undergone. Nor was pursuit necessary. The French army rapidly dispersed, and the road to Calais was open. The prisoners taken by the English were so numerous that they could not be properly guarded: but the king ordered that their lives should be spared. While, however, the battle was still undecided, a cry was raised that the village in the rear of the English army was being attacked, and he issued orders for a general slaughter. The attack was made by a few armed peasants who were speedily repulsed, and the slaughter was immediately stopped.

The march to Calais, and return to England.

After remaining a sufficient time to refresh his army, Henry continued his march to Calais without further opposition; and, soon afterwards, returned to London which he entered amid the acclamations of his rejoicing people: but instead of following up the victory of Agincourt, he remained in England for two years, without taking any further measures to maintain his claims to the crown of France.

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Continuation of civil war in France.

Meanwhile the civil feuds in that country continued with increased rancour. The Queen adopted the side of the Duke of Burgundy, and thereby entered into an unnatural contest with her eldest son, the Dauphin, who belonged to the other party. Both factions applied to the king of England for assistance: but, when Henry actually landed in Normandy with a large army, they made to each other professions of union, in order that the common enemy of France might be opposed. This reconciliation was, however, of short duration, for the duke of Burgundy was, soon after it was made, assassinated in open daylight and in the presence of the Dauphin, and the contentions of the rival parties were again renewed.

The English and Burgundian alliance.

The young Duke of Burgundy immediately concluded an alliance with the English king, who had, in the meantime, captured several important towns in Normandy. The treaty of alliance between the Duke and the king of England was signed at Troyes, where it was agreed that the latter should marry Catherine, the daughter of the French king, and should be acknowledged as the lawful heir to the French throne. The Duke of Bedford, Henry's second brother, was at the same time betrothed to the Duke of Burgundy's sister. Charles the Sixth nominally sanctioned this agreement; but he was in so feeble a state of health, that he was unable to take a just

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view of this or of any other important subject.

Death of Henry the Fifth.

Henry did not long survive these arrangements. While prosecuting the war against the Dauphin, he was attacked by a disease which eventually proved fatal to him; and he died on the 31st of August, 1422, in the height of his career of victory.

Accession of Henry the Sixth, and arrangements with regard to the government of France and England.

He left an infant son of only nine months of age, who succeeded him upon the throne of England as Henry the Sixth. The unhappy king of France died two months after his powerful son-in-law: and the Burgundian party immediately proclaimed the young child, Henry, as king of France. The Dauphin, asserting his undoubted right to the throne, assumed the same title, and was crowned at Poictiers. Henry the Fifth's third brother, the Duke of Gloucester, was appointed the Protector of England, with a council to assist him: and the Duke of Bedford was invested with the command of the English army, and with the management of the English interests in France. He was assisted in his charge by the Earl of Salisbury, the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Talbot, and Sir John Falstaff, who were all reckoned among the noblest knights of their age and country.

Warfare against the Dauphin and his followers.

The first important engagement that took place between the English and the followers of Charles the Seventh of France was at Crevant, where the

latter were totally defeated. In the following year a sanguinary battle occurred at Verneuil, which was the severest struggle that had taken place since the battle of Agincourt. Charles was chiefly supported on that occasion by Scotchmen: but both the Scotch and French were put to flight, and the last hopes of Charles appeared to have failed. He fled to the provinces beyond the Loire, where the people still remained true and faithful to his cause; while all the north of France was in the possession of the English and their allies.

The siege of Orleans.

When the fortunes of the rightful sovereign of France were at this low ebb, the Duke of Bedford resolved upon undertaking the siege of Orleans, for which purpose he despatched a large army to that town under the command of the Earl of Salisbury. Orleans is situated on the Loire, and was a place, at that crisis, of considerable importance, because it occupied a central position between the part of the country that adhered to the English and the provinces that remained faithful to king Charles.

The siege of Orleans was commenced in the month of October, 1428. The Earl of Salisbury being killed by a cannon-ball soon after it was begun, the chief command of the English forces devolved upon the Earl of Suffolk. The besieged garrison exhibited great energy and self-denial in the defence of the town, for they felt that the

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last hopes of their sovereign rested upon them. They were commanded by Dunois, and an old knight named La Hire, who were both the bravest of the brave.

The Battle of Herrings.

The siege was of long duration. The Earl of Suffolk, finding that he was unable to carry the town by assault, blockaded it, and the garrison were subjected to the horrors of hunger in addition to the horrors of the siege. The English soldiers were successful in every engagement. One in particular deserves mention because of the courage with which the English defeated a French force of far greater numbers. A party under Sir John Falstaff, which was, at the time, escorting supplies into the English camp, defeated a large reinforcement that was attempting to relieve the town. This action was called the Battle of Herrings, as a large quantity of that provision was among the supplies defended by the successful detachment. The hopes of the people of Orleans had fallen very low, Charles was thinking of a retreat to the mountains in the south of France, the English were looking forward to certain victory, when Orleans was relieved and France saved by the courage of a peasant girl.

Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans.

Joan of Arc, the heroine of Orleans, was born at Domremy, a small village in Champagne. She had been, from her infancy, a pious, gentle, enthusiastic girl, and the late events in France had

increased her piety towards her Maker, and her devotion to her king. Her thoughts being continually occupied by the unhappy condition of her country, she was induced, by often dwelling upon the subject, to entertain the idea of being herself the saviour of France. She fancied that she heard voices from Heaven, encouraging her to undertake that noble task, and that she saw celestial beings, who animated and cheered her. Full of this design, which was quickened by the latest news from Orleans, she persuaded her parents to let her pay a visit to an uncle who lived at a short distance from her home, and with whom she went to the nearest town, and requested the assistance of the governor in a journey which she wished to make to Chinon, where Charles was then residing, as she was commissioned by Heaven to relieve the city of Orleans and to crown her sovereign at Rheims.

She proceeds to meet Charles at Chinon.

The governor bluntly refused to afford her any assistance. But the fame of her proceedings had, by this time, become known, and two gentlemen, believing in the divine mission which she asserted, escorted her to Chinon. The journey was dangerous, for all the intervening country was in the possession of the English and Burgundians: but it was performed in safety, and, on her arrival, she was admitted, after some natural hesitation upon the part of Charles, to an interview with her king. She was strictly examined by the university and

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the parliament at Poictiers, and rigid enquiries were made with regard to her previous life and conduct. Neither blot nor stain being found against her, she received permission to accompany a detachment which was about to see whether help could be conveyed to the garrison of Orleans.

She goes to Orleans.

It does not appear that those in authority attributed to her any supernatural mission: but the people in general believed that she was sent by Heaven to aid them. Exaggerated reports of her power preceded her to Orleans, and even found their way into the English camp. The besiegers regarded her as a person in league with evil spirits: the besieged brightened up with fresh courage and animation.

Her entry into that city.

The detachment which she accompanied passed by the outposts of the English army without hindrance, and, at midnight, she entered Orleans amidst the rejoicings of the people. The sight was a curious and an inspiriting one. A young girl, scarcely nineteen years of age, rode through the ranks of armed men on a beautiful charger, which she managed with grace and ease. She was clad in plain armour such as men then wore; a favourite sword hung at her side; and she held in her hand an embroidered banner on which were the fleurs-de-lis, or the national emblem, of France, and a picture of the Redeemer.

Her presence speedily effected a change in the

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aspect of the siege. The English were subdued by vague fears and apprehensions, and the French were as much inspirited, as they were before disheartened. The Maid herself led the garrison to each attack upon their foes, and wherever the conflict was fiercest, she was to be found. The English were driven from one position after another, until, within seven days of her arrival, they departed from the city, completely baffled and defeated.

The siege is raised.

The first part of her design was accomplished: the second was now to be performed. She persuaded Charles to advance to Rheims, in order that he might be crowned there, as all his ancestors had been. The expedition seemed, at the time, to be impossible, for all the surrounding country was Burgundian; but it was performed in safety. Town after town opened their gates to Charles, and, escorted by the Maid of Orleans, he entered Rheims in triumph, and was again crowned as king of France, while Joan of Arc stood, during the ceremony, at his side, with her banner in her hand. Her task was done; and she desired permission to return to her parents and home: but the king had further need of her services, and refused to grant her request.

Progress of Charles to Rheims, where he is crowned.

Joan of Arc was soon afterwards taken prisoner. She was kept in captivity for several months,

Captivity, trial, and death of Joan of Arc.

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and was subsequently tried before a tribunal composed of various French and English ecclesiastics upon a charge of witchcraft. After signing a paper of confession, she was again committed to prison: but, upon her reassuming man's apparel, after she had promised not to do so, she was condemned as a relapsed heretic, and sentenced to be burnt alive. This abominable sentence was carried into effect at Rouen. Frenchmen and Englishmen were alike guilty of this foul iniquity, and those whom she had served made not the slightest exertion to save her. The only fault which she had committed consisted in too great devotion to the cause of a slothful and selfish king.

Reverses of the English in France, and their abandonment of that country.

The cause of the English in France gradually declined after this event. The war was continued for many years: but the English did not carry it on with the resolution and vigour which they before displayed. In A. D. 1435 the Duke of Burgundy, who had for some time past been much dissatisfied with the English alliance, was reconciled to his sovereign. This happy event for France was the occasion of the Duke of Bedford's death, and the invaders, being deprived of the services of their able commander, were obliged to yield, one after another, the important towns of France which they held, until Calais was the only city that remained in their hands. The transactions of the war preceding the abandonment of France were

neither very important nor interesting. It was a happy thing for both countries that the guilty ambition of the English was not carried to a successful conclusion.

CHAPTER XII.

WARS OF THE ROSES.

From A. D. 1445 to A. D. 1483.

Character of Henry the Sixth—His marriage—Fate of the Duke of Suffolk—Jack Cade's insurrection—Birth of Prince Edward—Yorkist and Lancastrian parties—Supporters of the two factions—Second protectorate of the Duke of York—Battle of St. Alban's—Temporary success of the Lancastrians—Battle of Northampton—Duke of York again Protector—Successes of Queen Margaret—Edward proclaimed king—Battle of Towton—Successes of the Yorkist party—Renewed efforts and defeat of Queen Margaret—Battles of Hedgeley Moor and Hexham—Capture of king Henry—King Edward firmly established on the throne—Defection of Warwick from Edward's party—Restoration of Henry the Sixth—Return of Edward—Battle of Barnet—Thorough defeat of Margaret at Tewkesbury—Conclusion of Edward the Fourth's reign.

The character of Henry the Sixth.

The latter part of Henry the Sixth's reign was saddened by civil war. The king, when he had arrived at years of discretion, shewed no ability

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for governing, and the several parties, that successively attained the chief authority in his council, obtained for the time being an absolute ascendancy over his yielding disposition. He possessed a sweet and gentle temper, and he was exceedingly anxious to do what was right: but he was too feeble both in mind and body to govern his unruly people.

His marriage.

In A. D. 1445 he married Margaret of Anjou, a princess of a haughty and imperious temper, who speedily attempted to gain the chief power in the state, and to influence the counsellors of the king. This marriage was distasteful to the majority of the English people, who observed with regret that Anjou, which was then a portion of the English possessions in France, was ceded to the princess's father at the time of its celebration. The Duke of Gloucester, the king's uncle, who, being a favourite with the people, had received the name of the good Duke Humphrey, and Cardinal Beaufort, the king's great uncle, were at the time contending for power: but the queen assisting the latter because he had been chiefly instrumental in effecting her marriage, various charges were brought against the Duke, whose death under very suspicious circumstances occurred soon after her arrival in England.

Fate of the Duke of Suffolk.

Cardinal Beaufort did not long survive his rival; and the Duke of Suffolk, who was also a

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partisan of the queen, succeeded in obtaining the chief authority in the council. He was extremely unpopular, for the reverses of the English in France were attributed to him, and consequently he did not long retain his high position. He was executed by the captain of a vessel by which he had been overtaken as he was attempting to effect his escape from England.

The insurrection of Jack Cade.

The discontent of the people was at this time exemplified by an insurrection which occurred in Kent. Jack Cade, the leader of the revolt, pretended that he was Sir John Mortimer, a descendant of Edward the Third. After they had captured London and had committed several excesses in that city, the rebels were defeated and their leader slain.

The birth of Prince Edward.

In A. D. 1453 the king fell into a state of complete imbecility which lasted for several months. He had been married for some years without any hopes of offspring: but at this time the queen bore him a son, whom however he was unable to recognize, owing to the condition of his health, which had reduced him to a state of unconsciousness. The young prince received the name of Edward, and his birth quickened the hostile feelings which party spirit had begun to foster among the people.

The Yorkist and Lancastrian parties.

The contests between the rival parties in the state were now approaching their height. The

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Duke of Somerset, whom the queen supported, was in as great disfavour with the people as the Duke of Suffolk had been, and he was opposed by Richard, Duke of York, who, although he at first professed to desire power for the sake of upholding the authority of the king, subsequently aspired to the throne. He claimed the crown upon the ground of his being descended, upon his mother's side, from Lionel, Duke of Clarence, who was the third son of Edward the Third, the Duke of Lancaster, from whom the reigning king was descended, being younger than his brother Lionel. His title to the throne by descent was well founded: but the family of Lancaster had been chosen in preference to that of the elder branch by the Parliament and the people. The contest was at first a struggle for supremacy between Margaret and the Duke of York: but, soon becoming a national dispute, it ended in a fierce civil war during which the country was divided into two great parties, the Yorkistsand Lancastrians. This war, which lasted about thirty years, is called the War of the Roses, because each party was distinguished by the badge of a rose, the colour of the Lancastrian sign being red, and that of the Yorkists white.

The supporters of the two factions.

The Duke of York was chiefly supported by the middle and lower classes, and the king by the nobility. Two powerful peers, however, the Duke of Salisbury and his son Richard, Earl of Warwick, were upon the duke's side. The latter was

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one of the most princely nobles in the land; his popularity was great, his influence immense, and the number of his retinue exceeded the amount of the royal establishment. His power was so great that he materially influenced the issue of the contest, from which circumstance he received the nickname of the 'king-maker.'

Second protectorate of the Duke of York.

The Parliament had appointed the Duke of York as the protector and defender of the realm during the indisposition of the king: but, upon Henry's partial recovery after an illness that had lasted a year and a half, the party of the queen and the Duke of Somerset regained the ascendency. The parliament attempted to settle the dispute by arbitration: but it had become too bitter to allow of its being compromised. The contending parties had already prepared themselves for war.

Battle of St. Alban's. May 22nd 1455.

The first battle took place at St. Alban's near London. The conflict occurred in the streets of the town, where the king's forces were assembled. The issue was for some time doubtful: but it was decided in favour of the Yorkists by an impetuous assault made by the Earl of Warwick and his followers. The Duke of Somerset and others of the Lancastrian leaders lost their lives; the king, being deserted by his standard-bearer and his guards, was wounded and taken prisoner; and the Duke of York by the right of conquest again

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constituted himself the protector of the kingdom, during the incompetency of the sovereign.

Prosecution of the war, and temporary success of the Lancastrians.

No further engagement took place for more than four years, during which time the contest for power between the queen and the Duke of York continued with unabated vigour, the peaceable and amiable king striving in vain to preserve peace. On the 23rd of September 1459, the royal and Yorkist forces again met in arms at Bloreheath in Staffordshire where the Earl of Salisbury totally defeated Lord Audley, the Lancastrian leader. The campaign was vigorously prosecuted. The Earl of Salisbury immediately after his victory joined the army of the Duke of York, which was, however, dispersed upon the approach of a Lancastrian force. The principal Yorkist leaders fled, and they were declared outlaws by a parliament, which was assembled by the queen at Coventry. But the triumph of the Lancastrians was short-lived. Warwick and Edward, the Duke of York's son, returning from Calais, whither they had escaped, assembled their followers and defeated the royalists at Northampton, where they again captured the king, and compelled Queen Margaret to flee with her son to Scotland.

The battle of Northampton. July 10th 1459.

The Duke of York again assumes the protectorate.

The Duke of York had fled to Ireland: but, on this sudden change in his fortunes, returned to London, and assumed the protectorate. He

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now for the first time openly laid claim to the crown: but, as the Parliament did not support his pretensions, it was agreed that he and his family should succeed to the throne upon the death of king Henry, who was to retain it during his life-time.

Successes of Queen Margaret, and Edward proclaimed king.

Queen Margaret, however, disdained all compromise; and, rather than see her son disinherited, again prepared for war. For a time she was victorious. The Duke of York was at one of his castles in Yorkshire, and, imprudently offered battle to a superior force of royalists; his troops were thoroughly defeated and he himself was slain. The success of the two parties fluctuated for a time. Edward, the new Duke of York, defeated the Lancastrians at Mortimer's Cross near Hereford: but the queen, with her bold and fierce followers from the north, advanced towards London, routed the Earl of Warwick's forces in a second battle at St. Alban's, and released the captive king, who had been in Warwick's camp during the conflict. But, instead of marching to London after her victory, she remained on the battle-field, and suffered her troops to plunder the surrounding country in a lawless manner. In the meantime Edward had joined the Earl of Warwick, and, advancing straight to the capital, was received by the citizens with acclamations, and proclaimed king of England with the title of Edward the Fourth. Might and daring had

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overcome right; and a gentle, but unwarlike king was set aside for one of a bolder and more determined character.

The battle of Towton. March 29th and 30th.

But the hour of Edward's triumph was not an hour for sloth. Queen Margaret was still in the field with a numerous and courageous army. She had retired towards the north on hearing of her rival's entrance into London, and thither king Edward followed her with the troops of Warwick and Norfolk, and with many from the southern countries, who were eager to revenge the cruelties of Queen Margaret's men. The two armies came in sight of each other at Towton, a village close to York. More than a hundred thousand Englishmen were met for battle, fifty thousand fighting under the banners of York, and sixty thousand under those of Lancaster. The contest was long and deadly. It began at four in the afternoon, and was continued with unabated vigour during the succeeding night. No quarter was given, friends and relatives were fighting on opposite sides with unrelenting fury, and the snow which fell throughout the conflict was stained with the blood of fellow-countrymen. On the following morning the new king's army was giving way, solely from the press of numbers, when a reinforcement under the Duke of Norfolk arrived and decided the battle in his favour. Queen Margaret and her unhappy husband fled to Scotland, leaving Edward the victor, after the most san-

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guinary, the most bravely-contested, and the most melancholy battle, that was ever fought by Englishmen.

Success of the Yorkist party.

Three months after the battle of Towton, Edward was crowned at Westminster, and his brothers George and Richard, of whom we shall hear more hereafter, were created respectively the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester. A new parliament, entirely attached to the interests of Edward, met in November, and the late king, the queen, and several nobles of the Lancastrian party were attainted.

Renewed efforts and defeat of Queen Margaret.

But Queen Margaret was not disheartened. She had fled to France, whence she returned in the following year with a small party of adventurers. A few fortresses in the north were taken by the Lancastrians: but her ill-disciplined forces dispersed upon the approach of Warwick, and the Queen was again compelled to flee. As she was seeking a place of retreat in this time of danger and desertion, an incident occurred which, although related only by a French historian, appears to be authentic. The queen, her son, and one follower, while passing through a forest near the coast, were encountered by a band of robbers: but, when the outlaws were quarrelling about their spoil, the queen and her young son contrived to effect their escape. In their flight, however, they met another robber, and the queen,

seeing no hope of succour, threw herself upon his mercy with the decision and boldness that formed a prominent feature in her character. "Friend," she exclaimed, "this is the son of your king, and I commit him to your care." Touched with a feeling of loyalty and compassion, the bandit constituted himself her protector, and conducted her and the young prince to a place of safety.

Defeat of the Lancastrians at Hedgeley Moor and Hexham. April 25th, and May 15th 1464.

In A. D. 1464 another desperate attempt was made by the Lancastrians to recover their forfeited power, and Margaret, ever active and energetic, was again in Scotland to superintend the arrangements and to animate her followers. Two severe battles quickly succeeded each other: Lord Montague, the brother of the Earl of Warwick, commanded the army of the Yorkists and was each time victorious. The first took place at Hedgeley Moor, where Sir Ralph Percy and the Duke of Somerset, who had both acknowledged Edward, were defeated on the Lancastrian side; and the second at Hexham, where, after a well contested conflict, the main part of Margaret's army was routed.

Capture and captivity of king Henry.

Up to this time king Henry had been with Margaret. After the battle of Hexham he fled into Lancashire, where he remained concealed: but in the following year he was basely betrayed by one of his partisans. He was taken prisoner and conducted to London, through the streets of

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which the Earl of Warwick ungenerously led him on horseback with his feet fastened to the stirrups, instead of treating the fallen and unhappy sovereign with consideration. For the next five years Henry remained a captive in the Tower of London, where he was treated with kindness, and where doubtless he spent his time in happier and more pleasant employments than when he was upon the throne.

King Edward firmly established on the throne.

King Edward was now firmly established in his authority as sovereign of England. His rival was in prison; Queen Margaret was an exile; and the great Lancastrian lords were driven to beg their bread in foreign lands. He had gained the hearts of the people by his conciliating manner and his handsome person: but tranquillity spoiled his character. In war he was full of energy and daring, but in peace he became licentious, extravagant, and careless. In May 1464 he had secretly married Elizabeth, the widow of Sir John Grey, who had been slain on the Lancastrian side at the second battle of St Alban's. Her fair face had attracted the king's attention, when she was presenting a petition for the restoration of her husband's forfeited estates. In the following September he avowed his marriage, by which he offended the nobility at his court, and especially the Earl of Warwick, his staunch supporter, who had materially assisted him in gaining the throne and in governing the king-

dom. Riches and honours were bestowed on all the relatives of the queen, and they formed, next to Warwick's, the most influential family in the realm. The Duchess of Bedford, her mother, had married Sir Richard Woodville, who was created Earl Rivers and Lord Treasurer; her brother Antony was made Lord Scales and afterwards Earl Rivers; and her other brothers and sisters were married into the families of the principal nobles. The Woodvilles were honoured by the sovereign to the utmost of his power, but they did not bear their elevation meekly.

Defection of Warwick from the party of Edward.

When the fortunes of the Lancastrian party appeared to be entirely extinguished, an unforeseen and marvellous revolution occurred which completely revived their hopes. The Earl of Warwick, who had hitherto been Queen Margaret's most bitter enemy, became her supporter and ally, and the Duke of Clarence, the youthful brother of the king, upheld her cause for a season. Edward the Fourth had entirely alienated the affections of his powerful subject either by his marriage, by the favour that he bestowed upon the queen's family, or by a personal affront; and the marriage of the Duke of Clarence with the elder daughter of Warwick contrary to the king's desire served to increase the animosity which each party had begun to entertain. In A. D. 1469 an insurrection broke out in the north under a person named Robin of Redesdale,

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and the king's army was defeated and the queen's father and brother were slain after the engagement. The name of Warwick was used by the insurgents, and there appears to have been reason for their employing it, as shortly afterwards Edward was detained at one of the Earl's castles as a prisoner. A partial reconciliation subsequently took place: but, upon the defeat of a second popular insurrection in Lincolnshire during the following year, the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Clarence fled to France.

Restoration of Henry the Sixth.

Edward spent the period of tranquillity that ensued in careless security and in joyous feasting: but the powerful Earl was busily employed in preparing to revenge the insults that he had received. Through the mediation of Louis the Eleventh, the wily king of France, he was reconciled to Queen Margaret; his younger daughter was betrothed to the youthful prince Edward; and he promised to assist her to the utmost of his power. Great preparations were made for invading England, and, while Edward was reposing in fancied safety, the Earl landed at Dartmouth, and immediately marched towards London. Numbers hastened to join the popular noble, and even many of Edward's forces which were commanded by Lord Montague, Warwick's brother, whom he had implicitly trusted, deserted their sovereign's cause. With a few attendants he fled rapidly to Burgundy, and Warwick, entering

the capital, again proclaimed Henry as the King of England.

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Return of Edward.

For six months the government of the country was carried on by Warwick and Clarence in the name of the restored sovereign: but this sudden revolution was succeeded by one still more sudden and daring. A small party consisting of about seven hundred men landed in the north on the 14th of the following March, and the exiled Edward was at their head. On finding that the people remained neutral, they marched to York, where they were permitted to refresh themselves. Edward, as he advanced, solemnly declared that he had returned not to assert his claim to the throne, but to regain the inheritance of his father as the Duke of York. As they marched towards London, the little band received additions to its numbers, and, when it drew near the Earl of Warwick's forces, the Duke of Clarence with consummate treachery went over to his brother's side. A few days after Edward entered the capital amidst the shouts of the populace, and Henry again fell into his hands.

The battle of Barnet. April 14th 1471.

King Edward remained only a few hours in London. Warwick was in the field with a large army at Barnet, and he could not be left unopposed. The troops of the Yorkist king drew near the enemy as it began to grow dark, and the two armies encamped close to each other during

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the night, throughout which the darkness was frequently broken by a gun fired from the Earl of Warwick's camp. On the following morning the engagement began. There was a thick mist: and the contending parties could see those only who were directly opposed to them. One third of Edward's army was in full flight: but, unconcious of this disaster, he continued the conflict, and eventually gained the victory from Warwick's mistaking some of his friends for foes. The great Earl himself and Lord Montague fell fighting valiantly on foot.

Thorough defeat of Margaret at Tewkesbury. Aug. 4th.

The throne was regained: but one more battle was to be fought to render the possession of it secure. Queen Margaret, whom Warwick had for some time past been impatiently expecting, landed on the very day that he was defeated. She was well supported: but Edward thoroughly routed her forces at Tewkesbury, where her son, prince Edward, was slain on the battle-field. She was herself taken captive soon after the engagement, and imprisoned in the Tower of London. Five years afterwards she was ransomed by king Louis of France, and she ended her stirring and eventful life in her native country. King Henry died in the Tower, a few days after the battle of Tewkesbury.

Conclusion of Edward the Fourth's reign.

Margaret of Anjou in captivity, and the feeble monarch, whom he had supplanted, dead, Edward the Fourth spent the remainder of his reign in

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peace. Dissensions, however, occurred in his family. The reconciliation with the Duke of Clarence does not appear to have been complete; and the king was incensed against him on account of his opposing the marriage of the Duke of Gloucester with his sister in law, who had been betrothed to Henry the Sixth's son, and on account of his desiring to wed the heiress of the neighbouring duchy of Bungundy, as he had lately become a widower. A doubtful charge of treason was brought against him, and he was put to death in the Tower.

This crime disturbed the peace of Edward's mind, and darkened his latter days. He died, thoroughly unhappy and satiated with self-indulgence, five years after his brother.

CHAPTER XIII.

UNION OF THE RIVAL ROSES.

FROM A. D. 1483 TO A. D. 1509.

Character of the Duke of Gloucester—Arrest of Earl Rivers and others of the queen's party—Accession of Edward the Fifth, and Richard's protectorate—Intrigues against the Protector—Scene in the council chamber—Richard usurps the crown—Insurrection of the Duke of Buckingham—Death of Edward the Fifth and his brother—Suppression of the revolt—Domestic affliction of the king—The Earl of Richmond invades England—The battle of Bosworth Field—Accession and marriage of Henry the Seventh—His dislike to the Yorkist party—Imposture of Lambert Simnel—Henry's foreign politics—Perkin Warbeck—Warbeck's endeavours to gain the English crown—Final defeat and execution of Warbeck—King Henry's foreign alliances—Importance of Henry the Seventh's times.

EDWARD, the Prince of Wales, was little more than twelve years of age when his father died: and, as might have been expected, the several parties in the kingdom took advantage of his minority to assert their claims to power. The young king was at the time residing at Ludlow Castle in

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Shropshire, where he was attended by Earl Rivers, his maternal uncle, Sir Richard Grey, his half-brother, and other persons who belonged to the party which desired to see the queen's relatives in authority.

Character of Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

At first there appeared to be only one other great party, of which Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, was the life and leader. Possessing a strong will, a hasty temper, and a keen intellect, he soon became the principal personage in the kingdom; and, forced by the intrigues of the ambitious nobles by whom he was surrounded to overcome them by means similar to those which they were using, he committed actions that have justly affixed an indelible stain upon his character. He appears, however, to have been a victim of circumstances, rather than the cold-blooded, deliberate villain that he is popularly supposed to have been. He was in the first instance opposed to powerful men, who, if they had been able, would have supplanted him in his natural position as the king's adviser, and either his fall or theirs was inevitable: but he was afterwards guilty of a crime which he could not have committed if he had possessed a good heart as well as a clear head. Although we cannot agree with the usually exaggerated estimate of Richard's character, we cannot regard him with the slightest degree of admiration.

Arrest of Earl Rivers and

The Duke of Gloucester was in the north of England when he heard of his brother's death:

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others of the queen's party.

but he immediately hastened to meet his nephew and to offer his services and counsel. The queen's party had, however, removed the young king from Ludlow Castle, and they were desirous of seeing him arrive in the capital before his uncle could obtain an interview with him. But their intentions were frustrated by the arrival of the Duke of Gloucester at Northampton, which place the king had left upon the previous day, but where Earl Rivers was still remaining. On the following morning the Duke of Gloucester, and the Duke of Buckingham who accompanied him, arrested Earl Rivers; and, riding on to Stony-Stratford, where the king had passed the night, placed the remainder of his attendants in confinement.

Accession of Edward the Fifth, and the Duke of Gloucester's protectorate.

A few days afterwards king Edward the Fifth entered London in state, accompanied by the Duke of Gloucester, who, at a council composed of the chief persons in the kingdom, was appointed the Protector of England during the minority of the king. The peers, moreover, took the usual oath of fealty to their new sovereign. The king entered London on the 4th of May, and it was arranged that his coronation should take place on the 22nd of the following month, after which event it was considered probable the Duke of Gloucester's protectorate might cease, according to the custom which had been observed in the case of the minorities of former kings.

After the discomfiture of the queen's party, the

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Intrigues against the Protector.

affairs of state appear to have been conducted with regularity and tranquillity under the superintendence of the Duke of Gloucester: but, as the day for the coronation approached, it was discovered that some of the nobles who professed to be his supporters were intriguing against him. Lord Hastings, who had been the friend and favourite not only of the late king, but also of the Duke, was at the head of this party. Their actual proceedings are unknown, but they appear to have meditated the downfall of the Protector. He was, however, too astute to be duped by their profession of friendship, and too powerful to be thwarted in his designs. The following account of the manner in which he defeated his opponents is, we believe, an accurate one, because it is taken from the narrative of an eye-witness.

A scene in the council chamber.

On the 13th of June a council was held in the Tower to make arrangements for the approaching ceremony. Lord Hastings had taken his seat among the councillors, and others of his party were also present. The Duke of Gloucester entered the room rather late, excused himself for not appearing sooner, and appeared cheerful and good-humoured. After a little conversation with the councillors, he withdrew. About an hour afterwards, however, he returned with his demeanour entirely changed, gnawing his under lips and playing with the hilt of his dagger, as he was accustomed to do when he was

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excited. Seating himself at the table, he asked what those deserved who were plotting his destruction. Lord Hastings replied that they ought to be punished as traitors. The Protector then accused the Queen, Jane Shore, one of his brother's mistresses, and another, of attempting to destroy him by witchcraft; and, drawing up his sleeve, shewed them his thin and wasted arm which they well knew had been in that state since his infancy. "Certainly, my lord," replied Hastings, "if they have acted so heinously, they are worthy of heinous punishment." "What," cried the Protector, "thou servest me with 'ifs' and 'ands.' I tell thee they *have* done it, and that I will make good upon thy body, traitor." When he had said these words, he struck the table with his fist, and, at that signal, a body of armed men, entering the room, arrested Lord Hastings and others whom the Protector pointed out. Lord Hastings was hurried out of the room, and forthwith executed upon a log of timber that was lying in the court yard of the Tower.

Richard usurps the crown.

Meanwhile the queen dowager had taken refuge in a sacred house near Westminster Abbey. After the occurrences that we have just related, the Duke of Gloucester accompanied by many of the leading noblemen in the kingdom visited her, and induced her to deliver into their charge the Duke of York, the king's younger brother, in order that he might

bear the royal captive company in the tower. When both of the young princes were within his power, the protector formally proceeded to usurp the throne, with the approbation and expressed sanction of the Parliament; Edward the Fourth's sons being declared illegitimate, upon the ground that the late king had been contracted in marriage to another lady, when he made Elizabeth Woodville his queen. This usurpation was made to appear a popular act by the Duke of Buckingham and other nobles entreating the Protector to accept the vacated crown. Richard the Third acceded to the throne of England on the 26th of June, and soon afterwards Earl Rivers and others of the queen's party were executed, after taking their trial for treason before the Earl of Northumberland. The pretext upon which the new king claimed the crown was very shallow. He had acknowledged his nephew's right, he had taken the oath of fealty, and he had governed in his sovereign's name: but he was supported in his usurpation by the nobility, who appeared to think that, in the unsettled state of the country, the rule of a powerful and intellectual monarch, although illegal, was preferable to a long and tedious minority.

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Insurrection of the Duke of Buckingham.

Richard's coronation was a gorgeous spectacle, at which the highest nobles in the land attended. Soon after it had taken place, he made a tour through England, stopping at most of the princi-

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pal towns, in order to render his presence familiar and his proceedings agreeable to the people. But while he was striving to make himself popular and was feeling secure in his ill-acquired position, a spirit of discontent and dissatisfaction was generally entertained, and he was surprised to find that an insurrection had, when he least expected it, broken out, the leader of which was the Duke of Buckingham, who had hitherto been his faithful friend and adherent. He had bestowed abundant rewards and honours upon the Duke, to whose care he had entrusted Morton, the Bishop of Ely, when that prelate was apprehended as a supporter of Lord Hastings. Morton seems to have incited his jailor to revolt, and to have entered with him into correspondence with Henry, Earl of Richmond, who, being the only surviving heir of the Lancastrian line promised to marry the Princess Elizabeth, Edward the Fourth's eldest daughter, and thus to unite the rival houses of Lancaster and York. Richmond was at this time an exile in France.

The death of Edward the Fifth and his brother.

The insurrection was first undertaken for the purpose of releasing the deposed king and his brother, who were still in the Tower, which they had not quitted since their uncle's usurpation of the crown: but, a short time after it had arisen, a rumour that the young princes were dead, which originated with Richard, rapidly extended through the country. They were seen again no more, and

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every one believed that they were put to death by the order of the reigning sovereign—a crime which filled up the measure of his iniquity, and brought upon him speedy retribution.

Suppression of the revolt.

The revolt was suppressed by the energetic conduct of Richard, before the Earl of Richmond was able to join the Duke of Buckingham, who was deserted by his followers and betrayed into the power of the king. He was soon afterwards executed; the leaders of his party fled; and the Earl of Richmond, who had reached the shores of England, returned to his place of exile. Several noblemen, and among them the Marquis of Dorset, the son of the queen dowager, repaired thither to the Earl, and made arrangements with him for another attempt upon the throne.

Domestic affliction of the king.

While Richard was expecting an invasion, and striving to avert it by persuading the Duke of Brittany to deliver his rival into his hands, he was afflicted with severe domestic sorrow in the loss of his only child, and soon afterwards of his wife. Both these occurrences occasioned him poignant grief, for he was, according to the most probable accounts, an affectionate father and a loving husband. He had a short time previously persuaded the queen dowager with her daughters to leave the sanctuary where she had taken refuge.

The Earl of Richmond invades England.

When the Earl of Richmond learned that the Duke of Brittany had consented to betray him,

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he quitted that country for the court of the French king who subsequently afforded him assistance. The Earl of Oxford and other Lancastrian leaders undertook his cause, and he was in correspondence with Lord Stanley, the Earl of Northumberland, and others whom Richard trusted, and who were apparently upon Richard's side. Henry sailed from Harfleur upon the 1st of August, 1485, and in about a week from that date landed at Milford Haven in Wales, with three thousand adventurers, most of whom were Frenchmen. The king was at Nottingham, and was taken by surprise at hearing that Richmond had landed in Wales, because he had expected to hear of his arrival elsewhere.

The battle of Bosworth Field. August 22nd.

Richmond marched rapidly towards the centre of the kingdom, receiving on the road several important additions to his force, and learning that his English friends were prepared to fulfil their promises of assistance. Such proved to be the case, for when he drew near the large army which Richard had assembled to oppose him, many of the king's adherents deserted to his standard. On the 22nd of August another decisive battle was fought for the crown of England. It took place about three miles from Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. King Richard fought with great personal valour, and arranged the troops under his command with much military skill: but the treachery of his false friends, Lord Stanley, Sir William Stanley, and the Earl of North-

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umberland gave the advantage to his opponent, and the last of the Plantagenet kings, deserted and betrayed, fell, sword in hand, upon the battle field. He had entered the engagement wearing the crown, and Sir William Stanley, finding it lying upon the ground all stained and dinted, placed it on the Earl of Richmond's head amidst the acclamations of the victorious soldiers, who saluted him with shouts as king Henry the Seventh.

Accession and marriage of Henry the Seventh.

Soon after the victory of Bosworth-field, Henry proceeded to London, where a parliament was assembled, and he was declared the lawful king of England. Before the parliament was prorogued, a petition was presented to the new king, requesting that he would fulfil his promise to marry the Princess Elizabeth, and thus unite the houses of Lancaster and York—an agreement which, it appears, he was desirous to evade. He assented, however, to the wishes of his parliament, and the marriage took place in the following January.

His dislike to the Yorkist party.

Henry was of a cold, cautious, calculating character: but he was admirably suited to the times in which he ruled. He committed an error, however, at the begining of his reign in shewing a marked dislike to the remaining adherents of the great Yorkist party, and an indifference to their interests, which proved the cause of much trouble and disquietude. One of his first acts upon

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acceding to the throne was to place the young Earl of Warwick, the Duke of Clarence's son, in the Tower: and, even feeling suspicious of the popularity of his own queen, he for some time deferred the ceremony of her coronation.

Imposture of Lambert Simnel.

The first evidence of the ill-feeling that existed among the Yorkists was a remarkably bold imposture which misled many of that party in Ireland. Simon, a priest at Oxford, at the instigation, it is supposed, of more influential persons, induced a young man named Lambert Simnel to affirm that he was the Earl of Warwick, the lawful heir to the crown, and that he had escaped from confinement in the Tower. The pretender first promulgated this absurd story in Ireland, where several persons of rank supported his pretensions, and where he was crowned as king. Margaret of Burgundy, Edward the Fourth's sister, assisted him, and the Earl of Lincoln, Lord Lovel, and other noblemen joined him with a band of German mercenaries. The pretender's ill-disciplined little army soon afterwards landed in the north of England: but they were not supported by the English Yorkists who knew that the Earl of Warwick was still a prisoner in the Tower. Henry had taken every precaution to ensure success, and when he encountered the insurgents near the town of Stoke-upon-Trent, he completely defeated and dispersed them. Lambert Simnel was taken prisoner and was appointed to

perform the lowest menial offices in the kitchen of the king. CHAP. XIII. A. D. 1485.

Henry's foreign politics.

During the three following years, Henry experienced no further opposition, and he had leisure to apply himself to the politics of foreign nations. He was interested in the court of Brittany where he had lived for many years in exile; and, as the king of France was desirous of annexing that duchy to the French dominions, he first attempted to mediate between the two parties and afterwards prepared an army to support the young princess Anne, who had succeeded her father in the government of Brittany. The expedition, however, resulted in empty show; the English forces that had landed in France were withdrawn; and the English people were disgusted at being taxed heavily for an idle parade of military power. In the northern counties an insurrection arose, but it was speedily suppressed. Shortly afterwards another English army landed in France, and was withdrawn in a similar manner. Henry appears to have had no intention of engaging in real warfare with France, and, on the latter occasion, he was induced to conclude a peace on account of the French king's favouring another claimant to the English throne.

Perkin Warbeck.

This person was one of the most extraordinary and mysterious characters in English history. At the beginning of 1492, when Henry was prepar-

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ing for an invasion of France, a youth with a handsome face and courteous mien landed at Cork. He asserted that he was Richard, Duke of York, the younger son of Edward the Fourth, and that he had contrived to escape from the Tower when his brother was murdered. The Irish, being in general zealous Yorkists, believed his story and supported his claims. Receiving an invitation from Charles, the king of France, he resided for a time at the French court, and, when he was oblig-ed to seek a retreat, after the peace which had been concluded with the king of England, he re-tired to Burgundy, where Margaret cordially welcomed him, acknowledged him as her neph-ew and gave him the endearing title of 'The White Rose of England.' The pretensions of this person gave great uneasiness to Henry, who caused strict enquiries to be made regard-ing his birth and parentage. From the re-ports of Henry's emissaries, it appears that the real name of the adventurer was Perkin Warbeck, and that he had been instigated by the enemies of the king to personate the young Duke of York, who, according to the most probable and consis-tent accounts, was put to death in the Tower with his brother. Margaret of Burgundy may herself have been deceived by her supposed nephew: but, as she supported so transparent an imposture as that of Lambert Simnel, and as she was known to be desirous of using every means to subvert

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king Henry's power, she was most likely the instigator and abetter of the plot.

Warbeck's endeavours to gain the English crown.

Many influential persons were implicated in Warbeck's intrigues, and were executed by order of the king. Among the number was Sir William Stanley who had proved a traitor to Richard the Third, and had held a high office under the new sovereign. It is not fully known, however, whether he was guilty or not. The young adventurer did not make a hostile attempt against England until some time after he had asserted his claim to the English crown. His first expedition, which was made on the coast of Kent, was feebly executed and speedily defeated. He afterwards went to Scotland, and was received with great kindness by the Scottish king, who believed the story he related, and permitted him to marry a sweet young lady of the royal blood. James the Fourth of Scotland, however, afforded more substantial assistance to his guest than sympathy. A Scottish army was sent into Northumberland where it plundered the inhabitants and returned without performing any other achievement; and, while the most northern county of England was subjected to the infliction of war, an insurrection broke out in Cornwall, where the people were discontented on account of excessive taxation.

Final defeat and execution of Warbeck.

Upon the return of his army, the Scottish king entered into a truce with Henry, and the

CHAP. XIII. A. D. 1497.

pretender left Scotland to make further attempts upon the throne, his faithful wife following him wherever he went, and sharing his reverses and privations. After experiencing failure in Ireland, he passed over into Cornwall, where he put himself at the head of the insurgents: but, on the eve of battle with the royal forces, he fled to a place of refuge. He was soon taken prisoner by the king's officers, and, after enduring the ignominy of being placed in the public stocks in London, he was placed in confinement with the Earl of Warwick in the Tower. A few months afterwards the two prisoners attempted to escape, and both suffered the penalty of death.

King Henry's foreign alliances

King Henry's foreign alliances were important, as they had an influence on after events in the history of England. His elder son, Arthur, was married, at the early age of fourteen, to Catherine, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain: but, upon the prince's dying a few months after his marriage, his brother, who was afterwards Henry the Eighth, received permission from the Pope to marry Catherine. The princess Margaret married James the king of Scotland, from whom the houses of Stuart and Brunswick are descended. Henry died in 1509.

Importance of Henry the Seventh's times.

One of the leading features in Henry the Seventh's policy is the suppression of the power of the nobility, and the maintenance of his own authority. He desired to see the sovereign of

England perfectly independent, and hence he discouraged every show of pomp among his nobles and every manifestation of power superior to his own. His exertions were successful: and henceforward the kings of England were supported both by the people and the peers. The epoch in which he lived was the most important that Europe has ever seen. The invention of printing and the discovery of a new world gave an impulse to the minds of men, which had not been experienced since the commencement of the present era, and which gradually led to the diffusion of greater knowledge and to the introduction of clearer light than had hitherto been enjoyed.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REFORMATION.

FROM A. D. 1509 TO A. D. 1547.

Accession of Henry the Eighth—Interference of the king in foreign politics—War with Scotland—The battle of Flodden—Thomas Wolsey—The Field of the Cloth of Gold—Execution of the Duke of Buckingham—The Reformation—The king engages in the controversy—Negotiations regarding the king's divorce, and the downfall of Wolsey—Henry's divorce from Queen Catherine—Second and third marriages of the king—Henry's cruelties towards Protestants and Romanists—The downfall of Cromwell—The death and character of Henry the Eighth.

HENRY the Seventh had become very unpopular during the latter years of his life on account of the churlishness of his manners and the covetousness of his disposition; and the people hailed with delight the accession of his son, who was under eighteen years of age, and who pleased every one by his handsome, open countenance and frank behaviour. Soon after the new king ascended the throne, he fulfilled his promise of marrying the Princess Catherine of Arragon, his elder brother's widow, and, together with his

bride, was crowned with great magnificence and pomp. The court of the young sovereign was for some time given up to gaiety and mirth: but, in the midst of the revelry, Henry, who had received an education superior to that acquired by most of the nobles and sovereigns of the period, found time to engage in reading and study, and he was wise enough to retain in his council the ablest of his father's advisers.

Interference of the king in foreign politics.

Henry soon began to take an interest in the affairs of foreign nations; and, yielding to the solicitations of the reigning pontiff, entered into a league that had been made against the king of France. Ferdinand of Spain, his father-in-law, had also joined the alliance, and an English army was sent into Spain to co-operate with that monarch in an invasion of France: but it was detained in Spain by King Ferdinand to assist in reducing Navarre, a neighbouring kingdom which he desired to obtain, and it returned to England in a wretched condition with its ranks thinned by disease, and its discipline destroyed by mutiny. In the following year, however, Henry himself conducted an army into the north of France: but after gaining a victory over the French cavalry in an engagement which, from the precipitate flight of the French, was called the 'Battle of Spurs', and after capturing two unimportant towns, he returned to England, and, in a short time, concluded a peace with France.

CHAP. XIV.

A. D. 1513.

The battle of Flodden.

Sept. 9th.

Meanwhile the king of France had prevailed on James, the sovereign of Scotland, to enter into an alliance with him, and to invade the north of England. The Earl of Surrey had been appointed to the command of an English army that was stationed in the northern counties, and was prepared to resist the invaders. A sanguinary battle took place at Flodden, where the English were completely victorious, and the Scottish king, his principal nobles, and bravest knights fell fighting on the battle-field.

Thomas Wolsey.

The minister who, at this time, had the chief management of affairs was Thomas Wolsey. This shrewd, ambitious, and intelligent statesman was the son of a private gentleman at Ipswich, and had rapidly risen from a comparatively obscure situation to be the Archbishop of York, the Chancellor of England, and a Cardinal of the Romish Church. His abilities were acknowledged and his influence feared by all the leading sovereigns of Europe. The interest which he took in foreign politics and the subtlety with which he contrived to make the monarchs of Europe appreciate his services, rendered his own sovereign of greater importance among foreign nations than the kings of England had hitherto been. He was a great favourite with Henry, whose amusements and pleasures he shared. He was an obsequious and pliant courtier, and he rapidly amassed an amount of wealth surpassing even

the treasures of his king: but his riches were lavished on others, and not hoarded for himself. His retinue was large, and his establishment costly. His assistance was freely rendered to needy scholars, to poor dependents, and to others who might be in want: and with all his ostentation and ambition he was diligent in business, and attentive to his duties as chancellor and minister. His administration was, upon the whole, beneficial to the people, and the fact that the king's government during the period of his power was milder and more moderate than it afterwards became is the best eulogy that can be bestowed upon Thomas Wolsey.

The Field of the Cloth of Gold.

In 1515 the aged king of France died, and was succeeded by Francis the First, a young and chivalrous prince; and in the following year Charles became the king of Spain upon the death of his grandfather Ferdinand. Both of these youthful sovereigns, with the king of England, were candidates for the throne of the Empire of Germany, which was at this time vacated by the death of the Emperor Maximilian. Charles was the successful candidate. His success brought him into direct collision with his rival, Francis; and each of these monarchs was desirous of obtaining the assistance of Henry, with whose help he would, in all probability, be victorious in the approaching conflict. Henry and his minister carried on secret negotiations with both parties: but Charles

CHAP. XIV. A. D. 1520.

the Fifth completely gained Wolsey to his side by promising to assist him in obtaining the papal crown, a dignity which, not contented with the power that he had acquired in his native land, the ambitious prelate coveted. King Henry, however, still undecided regarding the part which he would take, had an interview with both of the royal rivals. His meeting with the Emperor was comparatively private, as Charles remained only a short time in England upon his way from Spain to Flanders: but the interview with the king of France was on a scale of surpassing magnificence. Henry went over to Calais, and an encampment, which, on account of the splendour of the royal pavilions and the gorgeousness of the decorations, was called the 'Field of the Cloth of Gold,' was prepared upon the confines of the French and English dominions. This friendly meeting was celebrated by tournaments, banqueting, and revelry: and the two youthful monarchs, after thoroughly enjoying themselves for a fortnight, separated, pleased with each other and their entertainment. But, notwithstanding this amicable meeting with the king of France, Henry entered into alliance with the Emperor in the warfare that ensued between those two princes. Some years afterwards he assisted Francis: but his aid, in a military point of view, was of no material importance to either party. Occurrences in his own kingdom so fully occupied his attention that

he was unable to continue his interest in the politics of other nations, and his lavish expenditure of money on himself prevented him from carrying on an effectual warfare.

CHAP. XIV.

A.D 1521.

Execution of the Duke of Buckingham.

Soon after his return from France, he had, in an unjust and tyrannical manner, put to death the Duke of Buckingham, a nobleman of the royal blood, whose only offence against the king seems to have been too great freedom of speech, but who had wounded the vanity and sneered at the pride of the cardinal. This act appears to have been the first indication of the pure, unmitigated tyranny, which is the chief feature in the character of Henry the Eighth.

The Reformation.

The state of Europe and of the Christian church was at this time unsettled. One great subject occupied the minds of all: the thoughtful and the unthoughtful alike were obliged to take a part in the grandest event that had yet occurred in Europe. A reformation, or a complete change in the doctrines and the forms of religion, was then taking place in many countries of Europe, and in no country was it more complete or more thorough than in England.

We have from time to time mentioned the conflict, which from an early age was carried on between different parties in the English Church, and which received a fuller development than before in the teaching and doctrines of Wickliffe. The princi-

CHAP. XIV. A. D. 1521.

ples inculcated by that good man extended into various parts of Europe, and continued to engage the affections of many in his native land. The doctrines that he taught were not new. They are to be found in all their freshness and purity in a book which, from every evidence both external and internal and from the effect that it produces upon the hearts and lives of those who are entirely guided by its precepts, we firmly believe to be divine. John Wickliffe opened that book, until then jealously closed and guarded, and gave large portions of it to his countrymen in their native tongue; and the study of that book, both in England and in Germany, led to the Reformation.

Various errors of vital importance had arisen on account of the Scriptures being withheld from the people; corruptions had deformed the observances of religion; and the traditions of men were taught instead of the commands of God. One of the chief errors consisted in acknowledging the Bishop of Rome to be the absolute head of the Church, and to have the power of degrading and deposing kings. The leader of the Reformation on the continent of Europe was a clergyman named Luther, whose bold attacks upon the papacy and unflinching energy in proclaiming the truth induced many to join him in protesting against the errors of the Romish Church; and the name of Protestant has from that time been

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A. D. 1521.

applied to all the followers of the reformed faith. In England the supremacy of the Pope was cast off by king and people; the national church was set in order; and, the Church of England being thus reformed from error and the Book of Life being made free to all, the country from that time forward increased in prosperity and happiness. The brightest days of English history were after the Reformation, and not before: and we feel sure that the blessing of Him who has said "them that honour me, I will honour," has been bestowed in rich abundance upon England.

The king engages in the controversy.

King Henry at first opposed every effort which was made to render the principles of the Reformation better known in England. He himself engaged in the controversy that was agitating Europe, and wrote a book against Luther, which so delighted the Pope, that he bestowed upon the English king the title of 'Defender of the Faith.' That title has since been borne, though in a different and a better sense, by the sovereigns of England. Soon afterwards, however, Henry engaged in a violent quarrel with the Pope, and, breaking off all connection with him, constituted himself the head of the church in his own country. Great benefit to the nation resulted from this arrangement: but the object of the king in effecting it was peculiarly shameful and base.

CHAP. XIV.

A. D. 1527.

Negotiations regarding the king's divorce, and the downfall of Wolsey.

Henry had, as we have already stated, married the Princess Catharine, his brother's widow, soon after his accession, and, through many years of trial and sorrow, she had proved herself a patient and loving wife. The king had lately become enamoured of Anna Boleyn, a lady in attendance on the queen, and he pretended to feel scruples regarding the legality of his marriage on account of the close relationship which Catharine had previously borne to him, in order that he might procure a divorce and marry Anna Boleyn. The negotiations about the matter were tedious. He applied to the Pope for his consent to a divorce: but the Pontiff was afraid to grant it, lest he should incur the displeasure of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, who was Queen Catherine's nephew. He despatched a Cardinal to England to try the case in conjunction with Wolsey. Delay after delay, however, was purposely made: and king Henry was so much incensed at the vacillating part which he thought Wolsey had taken in the affair, that he withdrew his favour from the ambitious prelate, and appointed another Chancellor. Wolsey was subsequently arrested on a charge of treason, and the fallen minister, thoroughly disheartened and disconsolate, died at Leicester, where he had halted on his journey to London. His dying words are peculiarly touching. "If I had served my God," he murmured, "as diligently as I have served my king, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs."

Henry is divorced from Queen Catherine.

The case of Henry's divorce was still delayed: but it was soon to be decided in a novel manner. A young clergyman named Thomas Cranmer had, one day, when talking upon the subject, expressed his wonder that the king did not make an appeal to the universities of Europe, and obtain the opinions of the most learned men of the day regarding the lawfulness of his marriage. This speech was reported to the king, who exclaimed, in his usually coarse but energetic language, "The man has got the right sow by the ear;" and, putting into practice the advice that he approved, he procured from the majority of the universities a decision in his favour. Still unwilling to separate from the Pope, who was averse to gratify his wishes, he hesitated to act upon the decision that he had obtained: but, at length, impatient of further delay, he listened to the counsel of Thomas Cromwell, who had been a dependent of Wolsey and had risen to great power after the ex-minister's fall, severed himself from all connection with the papacy, and declared himself, as we have already stated, the head of the English Church. The parliament subsequently confirmed this title.

Second and third marriages of the king.

In January 1533 the king married Anna Boleyn, his previous marriage being pronounced illegal by Cranmer, who, much against his will, was made Archbishop of Canterbury. Queen Catharine lived in retirement: but, until the day of her death, she maintained that she, and she alone,

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was Henry's lawful wife. Anna Boleyn herself soon suffered a reverse of fortune similar to that which she had inflicted upon the unhappy queen. The king grew weary of her, fixed his vile affections on Jane Seymour, a lady of her court, and had her executed upon her being unjustly declared guilty of adultery. The day after her death he married Jane Seymour, who died in the following year in giving birth to a son.

Henry's cruelty towards Protestants and Romanists.

Although he had broken off all connection with the Pope, Henry did not favour his Protestant subjects. He behaved, indeed, with equal cruelty towards both parties. He beheaded Sir Thomas More, his high-minded and conscientious chancellor, and other eminent Romanists, because they would not acknowledge his supremacy over the church in England; and he executed several persons who denied some of he fundamental tenets of Romanism. At Cromwell's instigation, he suppressed all the religious houses in the kingdom, and appropriated their ample revenues to his own use and to that of the licentious nobles who composed his court. Those houses had been abused, and filled with careless, irreverent, and idle inmates: but they had, at the same time, afforded a shelter for the sick and indigent, and had secured a retreat for the traveller and stranger. Enquiry into the condition of the convents was needed: but no excuse can be made for the wanton manner in which they were dis-

poiled to enrich a cruel tyrant and a greedy court.

CHAP. XIV.

A. D. 1540.

The downfall of Cromwell.

Cromwell, the minister, by whose agency the monasteries had been suppressed, did not remain much longer in power. His downfall was as rapid as his rise. He had negotiated a marriage between his master and Anne of Cleves in Germany: but she was not fair enough to please Henry, who procured a divorce from her and a sentence of treason against Cromwell. The fallen statesman was condemned unheard, and was executed on Tower-hill. Henry did not remain long unmarried after his divorce. He made Catharine Howard, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, his queen: but she was found guilty of incontinency, and was condemned to the scaffold. His sixth and last wife was Catharine Parr, a widow lady, who survived him. She had one day a narrow escape from the block: but she saved herself by adroit flattery of the king. Henry died on the 27th of January, 1547. As he approached the day of his death, his furious passions and uncontrollable temper increased to such a violent degree, that no one dared to approach him or to inform him of the state of his health. His thirst for blood continued, and but a few days before his decease he executed the amiable and accomplished Earl of Surrey; and the Earl's father, the Duke of Norfolk, was only saved from the scaffold by the death of the king. Henry the Eighth, the light-hearted, bluff, and burly young

CHAP. XIV. A. D. 1547. monarch, had degenerated into a self-willed, imperious, and overgrown tyrant. He died unloved and unregretted.

CHAPTER XV.

ENCOURAGEMENT AND TEMPORARY CHECK TO THE REFORMATION.

FROM A. D. 1547 TO A. D. 1558.

Accession of Edward the Sixth—War with Scotland—Progress of the Reformation in England —Intrigues and downfall of Lord Seymour—Decline of the Protector's popularity—The downfall and execution of Somerset—The Duke of Northumberland's great ambition—Death and character of Edward the Sixth—Lady Jane Grey's short-lived reign—Accession of Mary —The queen's marriage—Check to the cause of the Reformation—The martyrdom of Latimer and Ridley. The martyrdom of Cranmer—War with France, and the fall of Calais—The death and character of Queen Mary.

UPON the death of Henry the Eighth, his youthful son, Edward, ascended the throne, during whose reign, the work of reformation in England was continued with vigour and moderation. The late king had left a will, appointing sixteen persons as his executors, and as guardians to the young sovereign during his minority. They were to have possessed equal power in the coun-

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A.D. 1547.

cil: but the Earl of Hertford, Edward the Sixth's maternal uncle, succeeded in gaining an ascendency over his colleagues, and in obtaining a majority of them to appoint him the Protector of England and governor of the king.

War with Scotland.

At the beginning of the reign, the Protector, who had meanwhile been created the Duke of Somerset, entered into hostilities with Scotland, his object being to effect the betrothal of his sovereign to Mary Stuart, the youthful queen of that country, and thus to unite the two kingdoms. He placed himself at the head of an army for the invasion of Scotland, and completely defeated the enemy at Pinkie, near Edinburgh. Hearing, however, that his political opponents were forming intrigues against him, he returned towards the South, leaving the object of the war unaccomplished. Mary was betrothed to the Dauphin of France, and the Scottish government entered into alliance with that nation.

Battle of Pinkie. September 10th.

Progress of the Reformation in England.

Meanwhile the reform in the national religion was forwarded by Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and other good men, who were supported and encouraged in their labours by the Protector. The work was conducted with peculiar wisdom and firmness; and, although it was checked for a season during the succeeding reign, it was brought to maturity in after years, and has ever since proved of incalculable benefit to the English people. Many of the nobility connected

with the court assisted the cause of the Reformation from motives of personal interest and selfishness: but the pious and learned persons, who were the principal instruments in advancing it, were earnest, upright, and conscientious men, and they upheld the truth because they believed it.

The intrigues and downfall of Lord Seymour.

One of the Protector's most troublesome and pertinacious opponents was his brother, Lord Seymour, the Lord High Admiral of England. This ambitious nobleman had married Catharine Parr, the queen dowager, and it is said that, after her death, he aspired even to the hand of the Princess Elizabeth. He endeavoured to supplant his brother, and to obtain an uncontrolled ascendency over the king; and the Duke of Somerset, after remonstrating with him in vain, was obliged to proceed against him for treason, and to procure his condemnation. He was executed as a traitor in the Tower.

Decline ot the protector's popularity.

The popularity of the Protector rapidly declined after this event. The discontent of the people at the suffering occasioned to the poor by the suppression of the monasteries, and at the loss of the privilege of free pasturage for their cattle, of which the new owners of the abbey lands had deprived them, increased to an alarming extent in several counties, and ended in popular tumults that were put down with the strong hand of power. In some places the populace complained of the re-

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cent changes that had taken place in the services of religion; but in most parts of the country the disturbances were occasioned by social grievances alone.

The downfall and execution of Somerset.

The Protector, who had for some time past excited the jealousy of his colleagues by his extravagance and ostentation, did not shew much alacrity in suppressing the insurrection, and annoyed many of the nobility by conceding, as they imagined, too much to the demands of the people. The Earl of Warwick had been the most active of the council in quelling the disturbance, and he appears to have been from that time an unrelenting opponent of the Protector. A strong party in the council chamber was formed against the Duke of Somerset, who was induced to resign the protectorate, was fined heavily, and was deprived of all authority and power. The Earl of Warwick, who was afterwards created the Duke of Northumberland, was the most powerful member of the council after his rival's fall, and he was careful not to suffer that rival to regain his former ascendency. When he had enjoyed the great power which he had obtained for more than a year, he had the Duke of Somerset arrested on a charge of treason. The fallen Protector was found guilty, and was executed on Tower Hill, amidst the lamentations of the poorer classes, by whom he had been reverenced and beloved.

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A. D. 1553.

Ambition of the Duke of Northumberland.

But the Duke of Northumberland's season of power was brief. The young king, who, on account of his tender age, had been influenced by those that had successively attained the supreme power in the state, was of a feeble constitution, and early disease had so debilitated him that there was every prospect of the reign being of short duration. The ambitious minister had given Lord Guilford Dudley, his fourth son, in marriage to Lady Jane Grey, a member of the royal family, and, after the Princesses Elizabeth and Mary, the heiress to the English throne; and he induced his sovereign to nominate her as the successor to the crown, in preference to the two princesses, and in defiance of the express desire of Henry the Eighth.

Death and character of Edward the Sixth. July, 6th.

Soon after he had acceded to the wishes of Northumberland, Edward died at Greenwich in the sixteenth year of his age. His early death deprived the English nation of a prince of rare promise, and may, even to this day, be considered a national calamity. Young as he was, Edward the Sixth had exhibited a manly and pious disposition, and a sincere desire to do what was right. He was intelligent and observant beyond his years; he was diligent in study, and munificent in his private charities; and there is every reason to believe that, if his life had been prolonged, he would have proved an upright and energetic king, inheriting his father's firmness of character subdued

CHAP. XV. A.D. 1553.

and softened by principle, and possessing his father's spirit controlled by religion and self-restraint.

Lady Jane Grey's short-lived reign.

Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed queen by her father-in-law and other members of the council, a few days after Edward's death. This sweet young lady was of a studious and retiring disposition, and she was induced to accept the crown with great reluctance; but she did not retain it long, and, when her short reign of ten days' duration came to an end, she resigned it with heart-felt pleasure. The people and most of the councillors were in favour of Mary, the daughter of Henry the Eighth and his first wife Queen Catharine; and Northumberland, being uncared for and unsupported, was apprehended at Cambridge, where he had proceeded to oppose the Princess, and was brought back a prisoner to London, where the new queen had in the meantime been proclaimed. The Duke of Northumberland was beheaded, and Lady Jane Grey and her husband were cast into prison. About a year afterwards they were executed on account of an insurrection against the queen, which had taken place under the leadership of Sir Thomas Wyatt. They were entirely unconnected with this revolt, which was excited by persons, who were discontented with several of the Queen's measures, for the purpose of deposing her in favour of her sister; and the death of these two innocent persons is prefectly inexcusable. It was the first indication of the

numerous acts of cruelty that have disgraced memory of Mary. An incident attending the execution of Lady Jane Grey was peculiarly touching. Her husband suffered first, and, as she was proceeding to the place of death, she encountered his bleeding body which was being conveyed in a cart for interment in the Tower. Her eye did not flinch, nor did her spirit quail, as she witnessed the mournful sight.

The queen's marriage.

The project of the queen's marriage was one of the earliest subjects considered after her accession. Her principal adviser was her cousin, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, who was anxious that she should be united to his son Philip, the king of Spain. This marriage, which took place in July 1554, was exceedingly distasteful to the English people, who had already begun to entertain that dislike to the Spaniards which reached its height in the succeeding reign. King Philip treated his wife with great indifference during the short time that he remained in England, and it is not surprising that his haughty, sullen temper excited the contempt of an open-hearted and generous people.

Check to the cause of the Reformation.

The restoration of the forms of religion that had until lately prevailed, and the return of her subjects to the mistaken belief which had been recently renounced, formed the favourite scheme that occupied the mind of queen Mary. She restored all those bishops who had been deprived of their

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A. D. 1555.

benefices during her brother's reign, and, chiefly by their advice, enforced compliance with her desires by the most cruel measures. She could have prevented the atrocities that ensued, if she had chosen, but she did not. It is necessary that we should here say a few words upon the subject of persecution on account of religion. The age of which we are writing was an intolerant one. Members of the Romish Church undisguisedly avowed that they considered persecution justifiable; and Protestants had, in a few instances, been guilty of this abominable crime; but they were the first to acknowledge its heinousness and to shun it. It is in no case allowable. Religion is a matter so entirely between a person's own conscience and his God, that even undue influence, much more therefore persecution, is intolerable. It has been justly remarked that, whosoever is right, the persecutor *must* be wrong.

The martyrdom of Latimer and Ridley. October 16th.

The persecutions of this reign tended more than anything else to strengthen the hatred entertained by the English people for the domination of Rome, and the desire for its removal. The storm of adversity exhibited the unflinching constancy of the Protestants in its best aspect, and animated others to imitate their zeal and devotion. About two hundred and fifty suffered as martyrs for their faith. The most eminent of this noble company of heroes were Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, who were burnt to death at Oxford.

The two latter died together, the aged Latimer encouraging and comforting his brave fellow-sufferer. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley," he exclaimed, "and play the man. We shall this day, by God's grace, light in England such a candle as, I trust, shall never be put out." And, thank God, it never *has* been put out. C. A. D.

The martyrdom of Cranmer March 22nd 1856.

The death of Cranmer was scarcely less affecting. When this eminent man was brought before the council that tried him, he was induced, by a natural, but still reprehensible, love of life, to renounce those doctrines which he had hitherto firmly believed. Even after this humiliation, his enemies refused to spare his life, and he was condemned to read his recantation publicly, and to be executed in the same manner as his brethren had been. But as the day of trial drew near, his heart revived and his courage returned. When he was brought before the assembly which was collected to hear him announce his new opinions, he boldly withdrew his recantation, declared that it had been extorted from him in a moment of fear, and proclaimed the doctrines of Protestantism, until he was silenced by some of those around. Upon being led to the stake, he displayed the same undaunted bearing. Placing his right hand first in the fire, "This hand," he exclaimed, "was the first to offend, and shall be the first to burn." In this manner Archbishop Cranmer died, one of the foremost martyrs of the Reforma-

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A.D. 1558.

tion, as he had in life been one of the foremost of its supporters. Bishops Gardiner and Bonner were the chief instigators of these barbarous executions.

War with France, and the fall of Calais.

The foreign affairs of queen Mary's reign consisted chiefly in her connection with Spain and a war with France. The latter was disastrous to the English arms. She had been induced to declare hostilities against the French at the representation of her husband, to whom the Emperor Charles the Fifth, upon his abdicating the throne for a cloister, had given the kingdom of Spain, the Netherlands, and his Italian possessions. Calais, the continental town which England had longest retained, was recaptured by the French, a circumstance that caused the greatest grief to the people and their queen. The latter, it is said, felt the disaster so deeply, that she exclaimed upon her death-bed, "If my body is opened, you will find Calais engraved upon my heart."

The death and character of queen Mary.

Neglected by her husband, and greatly disappointed at her hopes of becoming a mother being frustrated, queen Mary spent her time, after Philip's absence, in retirement. She died soon after the capture of Calais, unwept and unregretted by the majority of her subjects. She had a naturally amiable temper, and a desire to do right: but the affliction to which her mother had been subjected, and the rigid nature of her education

in the strictest accordance with the tenets of the Romish Church, had in early life embittered her disposition. Subsequent disappointments had still further aggravated her ascetic and unloveable character. She was much influenced by the advice and opinions of others, but, although she possessed power to restrain their cruel acts, she did not exert it, and her reign was stained by enormities which can never be excused or extenuated. The cause which she had at heart was ruined, and the blood of her martyrs was the seed of the English Church.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TRIUMPH OVER SPAIN.

FROM A. D. 1558 TO A. D. 1625.

Accession of Queen Elizabeth—Separation of England from connection with the Bishop of Rome—Completion of the Reformation in England—The Act of uniformity—The Puritans—The queen takes part in public affairs—Elizabeth's treatment of Mary Queen of Scots—Roman Catholic intrigues—Execution of queen Mary—Rivalry between Spain and England—Warfare in the Netherlands—Sir Philip Sidney—Preparations for war in Spain and England—Defeat of the Invincible Armada—The Queen's favouritism—The Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Essex—Downfall of the Earl of Essex—Death of Queen Elizabeth—Accession of James the First—Gunpowder treason and plot—Tyranny of King James—Conclusion of the reign.

THE joy of the nation upon the accession of Elizabeth, queen Mary's younger sister, was very great. Bonfires and illuminations testified the delight of the people of London; the bells of the churches rang merry peals; and the members of

A.D. 1558.

the House of Commons, when the event was proclaimed, at once rose and shouted with enthusiasm, 'Long live Queen Elizabeth.' The whole nation felt happy at their release from the gloomy and cruel tyranny which had oppressed them for the last five years. A young princess was their queen, and no one dared to oppose her title.

Separation of England from connection with the Bishop of Rome.

The number of Protestants had increased considerably since the days of the Sixth Edward: but the Romanists still formed a powerful party, and both looked forward with great anxiety to the course which the queen would pursue with regard to the cause of the Reformation. Her policy in this respect was somewhat doubtful at first: but the way to which her feelings directed her was soon discerned, for, immediately after her accession, she ordered that a great portion of the services should be conducted in English, the native language of her people, instead of in Latin, which few but the best educated among the clergy were able to understand. But the work of Reformation was effectually aided by the insolence of the Pope, who, when he heard of Elizabeth's accession, declared that she was illegimate, because the marriage of Anna Boleyn, her mother, had been declared illegal by a former Pope; but he offered to acknowledge her title, if she would place herself at his mercy and trust to his indulgence. This generous offer was of course rejected: and slowly,

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but firmly, and with great wisdom and prudence, the Reformation was continued in England. Her religious services were revised; her church was set in order; and no foreign potentate has since been able to interfere with her Church or State.

Completion of the Reformation in England.

All the bishops but one refused to comply with these arrangements, and their places were filled by men who, under the direction of Matthew Parker, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, prosecuted the work of reformation throughout the country. Acts of parliament were passed, restoring the supreme power in the church to the sovereign, and requiring uniformity to the prescribed mode of worship. The queen appointed a commission to exercise the authority given to her by the former act, and to try ecclesiastical cases; and this court subsequently became a formidable means of oppression. The Church of England has ever since been effectually separated from the Church of Rome.

The Act of Uniformity.

The Act of Uniformity was directed against two classes of persons—the Roman Catholics, and Protestants who imagined that the Reformation in England had not been carried far enough. The latter included persons of various opinions, who received the name of Puritans, because they thought that the English Church was not sufficiently pure and, as they increased in numbers, they formed a very formidable party in the state.

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A. D. 1558.

The queen takes part in public affairs.

Queen Elizabeth, from the commencement of her reign, was assisted by the counsel of wise and intellectual ministers, among whom the most eminent was Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh. The queen herself took part in public affairs, and, although she often exhibited an imperious temper similar to her father's, she was cautious and prudent, withdrawing demands which appeared offensive to the people with such consummate tact, that she frequently seemed to be conferring a favour rather than retracting a command. She early manifested a desire to remain unmarried, saying that she wished to live and die a virgin queen. Many foreign princes wished to marry her, among whom was Philip, her sister's husband, and he was intensely chagrined at her refusing his offer.

Elizabeth's treatment of Mary Queen of Scots.

At the beginning of her reign, Elizabeth's jealousy was excited against her cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, who assumed the title of Queen of England upon the death of the late sovereign. The majority of Mary's own subjects were opposed to her, for she adhered to the Romish faith, and the Reformation had spread to a considerable extent in Scotland. When she reached that kingdom after the death of her husband, the king of France, she found many of her people in open hostility against her; and, after a few years of trouble and perilous adventure, she was obliged to take refuge in England, where Elizabeth re-

CHAP. XVI. A. D. 1568.

ceived her in a most uncourteous manner. Instead of treating the unhappy queen with sympathy and respect, Elizabeth placed her in close custody which ended only with her life. Elizabeth's conduct may have been politic, but it was most certainly unkind.

Roman Catholic intrigues, and the execution of queen Mary.

During the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign, the kingdom was free from all tumults and disturbances: but in 1569 the Duke of Norfolk formed a scheme for his marriage with Mary Queen of Scots. It was defeated and the Duke was committed to the Tower. An insurrection afterwards broke out in the north of England: but it was speedily suppressed. The leader of the revolt had applied to Spain for aid, a practice which was followed in all the other disturbances of the reign. The Roman Catholics were generally the instigators of these attempts against the queen, for the purpose of restoring their form of religion and of releasing the Queen of Scots. Mary had become the cause of rebellion, for the ill disposed frequently made her name the watchword of treason. After the defeat of a plot against Elizabeth, in which she is supposed to have been implicated, the queen and her ministers determined to put the captive sovereign to death, and thus to remove the principal source of disaffection. The unhappy queen was executed on the 8th of February 1587. Elizabeth was so often guilty of dissimu-

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lation, that we have not the means of ascertaining her feelings upon this occasion. She appeared to be deeply grieved at the necessity which existed for her cousin's death; but she had for a long time exhibited a spirit of unbecoming jealousy towards her captive, and her government was quite strong enough to have put down all opposition, without resorting to the extreme measure of putting the unfortunate Queen of Scots to death.

Rivalry between Spain and England.

The enmity between the English and the Spaniards which had existed for several years was now increasing in bitterness. Spain was the foremost nation in the world. One of her sovereigns had lately ruled the Empire of Germany; a great part of Europe belonged to her; she had been the first nation to colonise the New World; she possessed the wealthy countries of Mexico and Peru; and the seas were frequented by her ships which returned to her coasts laden with Indian gold and jewels. But the English nation had begun to assert their supremacy at sea. English sailors also had discovered new lands; English sailors had been the first to circumnavigate the globe; and English sailors had frequently met the Spaniards, whose cruelty towards the Indians and arrogance towards themselves had excited their just anger. Constant conflicts took place between the two nations, and the English were generally victorious. The English ships were smaller and less unwieldy than those of the Spaniards; they were

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A. D. 1585.

commanded by such men as Hawkins, Drake, and Raleigh; and they were manned by bold-hearted seamen who would do and dare anything. Rumours had long been prevalent of the great preparations which the king of Spain was making to bring this uncertain warfare to a decisive issue. The two nations were to try their strength: but the approaching conflict had a deeper signification. It was to be a struggle between Romanism and Protestantism—between the despotism of the dark ages, now collected for its final effort, and the freedom of the new age, upon the side of which England took the foremost part.

Warfare in the Netherlands.

The queen had assisted the people of the Netherlands in their efforts against the Spaniards, and her conduct on that occasion afforded an excuse for the court of Spain to declare hostilities. The English army in the Netherlands was commanded by the queen's favourite, the Earl of Leicester, who proved himself a most incompetent general: but it was adorned by the presence of several gallant gentlemen. The best remembered of these was Sir Philip Sidney, who, as he was lying wounded on the battle-field, exhibited an instance of that pure unselfishness which is generally combined with valour. Some water was brought to him; but, observing a dying soldier near him, he pushed the cup away gently, saying "That poor man's necessities are greater than mine: give it to him."

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A. D. 1587.

Preparations for war in England and in Spain.

For several months the ports of Spain had been busy with preparations for equipping a powerful fleet intended for the invasion of England. A large army was to embark on board of it, and another army of still greater size was to co-operate with the expedition from the Netherlands. But in the mean time England was not idle. There was no mention of treason, now that an enemy was approaching the English coast: the Roman Catholics were as patriotic as their fellow-countrymen. Every Englishman that could bear arms prepared for defence; bands were raised in the different counties; and a large army was stationed at Tilbury on the Thames to protect the capital. Elizabeth herself rode through the lines at Tilbury, and cheered the soldiers by her presence. "I am resolved," she told them, "in the midst and heat of the battle to live and die amongst you all, and to lay down for my God, for my kingdoms, and for my people, my honour and my blood. I have the body of a weak woman: but I have the heart of a king, and a king of England too." But it was in the fleet that the strength of England lay. The greater portion of it was stationed at Plymouth, and was commanded by Lord Howard of Effingham, the lord high admiral of England, under whom were the brave commanders who had maintained the honour of the English name in many an adventurous voyage and many a desperate fight.

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A. D. 1588.

Defeat of the Invincible Armada.

July 19th to August 7th.

One day Sir Francis Drake, Captain Hawkins, and other officers were playing at bowls upon a green at Plymouth, when a messenger, breathless with haste, ran up to tell them that the Invincible Armada was coming—he had seen it in the Channel. There was an immediate rush and some confusion. "Stop, my good friends," exclaimed Drake, "there's time enough to finish our game first, and to thrash the Spaniards afterwards." Drake's game was finished, and, the officers having repaired on board their vessels, the English fleet put out to sea. When they came within sight of the enemy, the Armada, although it had been reduced by a storm off the coast of Spain, was too formidable for the English ships to engage it with advantage. The English commander, however, followed the mighty armament at a little distance, captured all straggling vessels, and continued to annoy the enemy by maintaining a running fight. After several days' pursuit, Lord Howard entered into a general engagement with the reduced fleet of the Spaniards; and the Spanish admiral, to avoid all further annoyance, determined to abandon the enterprise, and to return to his country round the north of Scotland. The greater part of his vessels were wrecked in a severe storm, and but few returned to inform their sovereign of the defeat of his Invincible Armada. The Spaniards never attempted to invade England again.

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A. D. 1588.

Favouritism f the queen.

Queen Elizabeth, although she possessed a masculine understanding and a stubborn will, was very vain and proud. She liked to have her court frequented by the young and gay, and she selected from among the handsomest of her courtiers favourites to whom she shewed unbecoming partiality. The principal of these was Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, an unprincipled man, who at one time aspired to her hand. After his death she transferred her favour to the Earl of Essex, a brave but headstrong courtier, who was more devoted to a military life than to the pleasures of the court. At his instigation the war with Spain was continued with alacrity, and was prolonged during the remainder of the reign.

Downfall of the Earl of Essex.

The Earl of Essex was subsequently sent to command the English army in Ireland, where insurrections had arisen and where the greatest confusion prevailed. While in that country, he was informed that enemies had been speaking against him to the queen, and he suddenly quitted his command and made his re-appearance at court. But this proceeding so irritated her majesty, that she banished him from her presence, and ever after refused to see him. This harsh treatment from a sovereign who had hitherto shewn him such marked favour, incited the Earl to rebellion: but the plot in which he engaged was frustrated, and he was tried and executed for treason.

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A. D. 1603.

The death of Queen Elizabeth. March 24th.

After the death of Essex the queen's health declined. She became morose and retiring, and at length she died, full of years and full of honour, on the 24th of March, 1603. She desired on her death bed, that she might be succeeded by James, the King of Scotland, who was the nearest heir to the throne. During this long reign England was raised to a commanding position among the nations, and the part which she then took in the history of the world was so bold and straight-forward, that Englishmen have ever regarded that period, as one of the most glorious in the annals of their country. The reign was also eminent for the additions made during it to English literature. Shakespeare, England's wisest poet, Bacon, one of her profoundest men of science, and Hooker, one of her most learned divines, lived in the days of the good and great queen, Elizabeth.

Accession of James the First.

James, the first king of England, Scotland, and Ireland, succeeded the late sovereign without the slightest opposition. He travelled slowly from the north, where he had received intelligence of her death, and some time elapsed before he reached the capital. This delay did not predispose his subjects in his favour. Soon after his accession a plot was discovered to raise a near relation to the throne: but the evidence was not conclusive. Sir Walter Raleigh, however, who was

supposed to have been implicated in it, was sentenced to a long imprisonment, and many years afterwards was executed upon the original charge of treason.

CHAP. XVI. A. D. 1603.

Gunpowder treason and plot, Nov. 5th 1605.

Both the Roman Catholics and the Puritans entertained a hope that James would relax the penal enactments against them: but he disappointed their expectations, and treated them with greater rigour than his predecessor had done. The former party was so irritated that some of their number entered into a plot against him and his advisers. The project contemplated was the destruction of the king and parliament by gunpowder. The conspirators hired a dwelling, the cellars of which extended beneath the Houses of Parliament: gunpowder was carefully concealed in these vaults, and a man named Guy Fawkes was selected to fire it with a slow match upon the day that the parliament assembled. The meeting of parliament was prorogued from February to November, and, during the time that the scheme was thus delayed, fresh adherents entered into the conspiracy, and one of these betrayed the design. He wrote an anonymous letter to a relation, recommending him to stay away from the approaching parliament, and informing him in ambiguous terms that a sudden blow would be struck by an unseen hand. This letter was shewn to the king and his ministers who had, perhaps, been advised

CHAP. XVI. A. D. 1605.

of the danger beforehand, and who readily comprehended its meaning. Everything was allowed to go on as usual until the 5th of November, when the parliament was to be opened in state: but on that morning, Guy Fawkes, who had constantly attended at his dangerous post, was apprehended by the officers of justice. Upon his revealing the names of his accomplices, they also were arrested and were punished for their projected crime. No event in English history has been remembered by the people like the Gunpowder Plot. Even to this day there is scarcely a school boy in England, who does not burn Guy Fawkes in effigy on the 5th of November.

The tyranny of king James.

King James was tyrannical and self-willed in the extreme. He had frequent conflicts with the House of Commons, who, representing the wishes of the people, attempted to restrain the regal power which was shewn in such a way as was incompatible with the freedom of the nation; and the king was not sagacious enough to appease them by retracting his demands in a conciliatory manner. A feeling against monarchy was gradually increasing, which was exhibited in all its fulness against his more estimable son.

Conclusion of the reign.

The king's court was too often a scene of revelry and riot. He was also too frequently influenced by unworthy favourites, the chief of whom were the Earl of Rochester and the Duke of

Buckingham. He made peace with Spain when he ascended the throne, and he constantly shewed a preference towards that nation, of which the people of England disapproved. He was of too peaceable a disposition, and, to the disgust of his people, he failed to continue the enterprises which had been begun in the former reign. James was a weak-minded and feeble monarch. He possessed considerable learning, but it was ill-arranged and of little use. He was never a favourite with his subjects. He spoke with a strong Scotch accent; he was ungainly in his manners; and he was ill-suited to the temper and disposition of those over whom he was called upon to rule.

CHAP. XVI.
A. D. 1625.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION.

FROM A. D. 1625 TO A. D. 1649.

Accession of Charles the First—Preliminary observations—The Royalists and Republicans—Religious differences of the period—The king's marriage, and his unpopular favourite—Collision between the parliament and the king—The Petition of Right—The king reigns without a parliament—Shipmoney and the case of John Hampden—War with the Scotch, and the Short Parliament—Assembling of the Long Parliament—Arrest of the five members, and the commencement of the civil war—Relative strength of the parties—Early successes of the Royalists—Oliver Cromwell and his army—Battle of Naseby—Ascendancy of the army—Imprisonment of the king—Death of Charles the First.

KING James the First was succeeded by his son Charles, whose reign was the most important and the most melancholy in the history of England. This eventful time was, from first to last, a contest between the people and their sovereign; it was characterized by a determined opposition to regal tyranny, which ended in the constitutional power of the English kings being more clearly defined

than it had hitherto been; it gave security and certainty to the freedom of the people; and it issued in great good to succeeding generations, although it brought the crime of blood-guiltiness upon the land. Good happily resulted from the evil of those days; but the end thus gained cannot justify the means used to obtain it. It is never lawful to do evil that good may come. The evil consisted in a people rising in rebellion against their appointed sovereign: the good that has resulted from that evil is seen in the liberty, happiness, and prosperity which Englishmen have since enjoyed.

Preliminary observations.

The revolution which took place in Charles the First's reign must not be considered as completed at his death. It began soon after he ascended the throne, but it was not concluded until William the Third was elected king of England. Although warfare was happily unknown in England during the reign of one of king Charles's unworthy sons, the principles for which the land had been involved in civil war were not carried into full practice until the abdication of the other. The period should be considered as forming a connected whole.

The Royalists and Republicans.

There were at this time two distinct parties in the nation—the Royalists who supported their sovereign, and the Republicans who opposed him. The former freely gave their time, their treasure, and their services to maintain the rights of their king, and, although many of them were grieved

CHAP. XVII.

A. D. 1625.

at the measures which he adopted and at the unconciliating spirit which he too often shewed, they thought it sinful to disobey his authority or to resist his demands. They were actuated by deep reverence and love towards king Charles, who possessed a large share of regal dignity and personal courteousness, and they supported his cause, even when it was at the lowest state, with unflagging zeal and ardour. The generality of the Royalists were English gentlemen of property, who were followed to the field by their retainers. A great number of them were high-minded men, who would have scorned a dishonourable action: but too many were noisy, boisterous soldiers who delighted only in revelry and war. The Republicans opposed their sovereign on principle. They considered that a king, although set over them by divine authority, should be resisted whenever he governed badly; that he was under the laws of the land as well as they; and that he was not entitled by his office to do anything inconsistent with their rights and their freedom. They thought that they were perfectly justified in waging war against one, who had neglected the privileges of that assembly which contained the representatives of the nation; and they imagined that a state governed by the people themselves was preferable to the ancient institution of monarchy, especially when the powers of the regal office were abused.

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A. D. 1625.

Religious differences of the period.

Religious feelings, as well as political, influenced the nation in this unhappy contest. The members of the English Church were, in general, supporters of the king, and the opponents of that church were consequently against him. The Puritans had lately increased in numbers and in influence; they believed that the interests of true religion were endangered, not only by the usual observances of the Church, and its connection with the State, but also by the attempts which were at this time made to bring its services into closer conformity with those of the Romish Church. The followers of the king nominally fought for the Church of England, and most were sincere in their professions: the Puritans fought for further reform, and, although many were utter hypocrites, a great number of them knew well how to use the Bible as well as the sword. The Royalist's respect for religion extended to sacred places as well as to sacred things: the Puritan desecrated the houses of prayer, and, in his blind zeal against forms, frequently forgot both order and decorum.

The king's marriage, and his unpopular favourite.

Soon after his accession to the throne, the King married Henrietta Maria, a sister of the French monarch. This marriage was exceedingly distasteful to the English people, because the Princess was not a Protestant, and was of a haughty and imperious disposition. The Duke of Buckingham, the late King's favourite, was equally in

CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1627.

the confidence of Charles; and, at his instigation, a war which in the last reign had been undertaken against the Spaniards was continued, but with doubtful success. The nation was exasperated at one of the armaments which had been prepared against Spain being transferred to the service of France, for the purpose of assisting the French king against some of his Protestant subjects at Rochelle. An expedition was subsequently sent to aid the besieged garrison of that town; but the Duke of Buckingham who commanded it was unsuccessful, and he returned with a weakened and dispirited army, to a people that had always disliked, and now hated him. The unpopular favourite was soon afterwards assassinated at Portsmouth by a disappointed officer.

Collision between the parliament and the king.

The king was obliged to apply to parliament for supplies of money for the prosecution of these wars: but the House of Commons continually refused to comply with his demands. The parliament was assembled three times: each time the necessary supplies were refused, unless a declaration were given that the king would govern in a less tyrannical manner than he had assumed; and each time the king levied taxes after the dissolution of parliament, in opposition to the wishes and feelings of his people. All who refused to pay these taxes were fined or imprisoned without trial. Two courts, called the Star Chamber and the High Commission, were made the means of great

oppression: in the one political offences, in the other ecclesiastical cases, were tried, and punishments of the most cruel kind were awarded to those who had been condemned by them. CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1628.

The Petition of Right.

Before the third parliament was dissolved, supplies for the king had been voted, upon his assenting to a bill which was called the Petition of Right, and which the king faithfully promised to uphold. The Petition of Right was a most important document. It provided that the king should never impose taxes upon the nation without the consent of parliament; that no one should in future be imprisoned without trial; and that those already imprisoned should be released. The parliament and the nation were delighted at the king's assent to this confirmation of the Great Charter which had of late been frequently violated: but Charles broke his word, and transgressed all the provisions to which he had agreed. The contest between himself and the parliament was continued with greater bitterness than before, and the houses were dissolved with his marked displeasure.

The king reigns without a parliament.

A new era now commenced in English history. The king, unable to obtain supplies by the means which had usually been adopted by his predecessors, determined to reign without a parliament and above the laws. No parliament was assembled for eleven years. During that time Charles reigned as an absolute monarch, he levied taxes at his

CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1629.

pleasure, and he fancied that he had gained as complete a control over the people as he could desire. His principal advisers were Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and Archbishop Laud. The former assisted his sovereign in the management of political affairs, and he was determined to use all his power and influence to make that sovereign absolute. He gave to the system which he proposed the expressive name of Thorough. It was to afford the king a thorough control over every one; a thorough command of supplies; and a thorough obedience to his will. Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury, proposed to himself a similar scheme in ecclesiastical cases, and he attempted to bring the services of the English Church into closer conformity with the Church of Rome than they had hitherto attained. In order to effect this he used the Court of High Commission with relentless severity.

Ship-money and the case of John Hampden.

An army was an indispensable means of carrying out these schemes of tyranny. As long as the king ruled without a parliament and against the wishes of the nation, it was impossible to keep the people in permanent subjection, except by a military force. In order to effect this object he was advised to revive an ancient mode of taxation, by which the navy had often been supported. The towns on the coast were formerly required to provide a certain number of ships, or to pay a sum of money for providing them. The practice was now

A. D. 1638.

extended to the inland parts of the country, and was illegally imposed upon persons who ought not to have been taxed in this manner. John Hampden, a gentleman of property, was the first to oppose this unwise and unjust tax. He had the courage to bring the case before a court of law, and thus to resist the whole strength of the government. The nation watched the case with intense anxiety, for every one would be interested in the decision that might be passed. After a trial of twelve days it was decided in favour of the government by a very small majority, five of the judges being on the side of Hampden and seven on the side of the government. In a time of general obsequiousness such a victory was worse than a defeat.

War with the Scotch, and the Short Parliament.

This state of despotism might have continued for many years, had not an outbreak occurred in Scotland. The Scotch had, as we have already stated, been very eager in the work of reformation, and, going further than their brethren in England, had rejected the ancient custom of forms for public prayer. The king and Archbishop Laud at this time determined to impose upon them a form similar to that which was used in England. This attempt so deeply irritated the people, that they immediately rose in rebellion, collected a formidable army, and advanced towards the south. The soldiers of the king, hastily levied and badly disciplined, were no match

CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1640.

for the enthusiastic army of the Scotch. A compromise was effected with the Scottish leaders, and Charles, anxious to carry on the war, was obliged, sorely against his will, to summon a parliament in order to obtain supplies. The houses, however, would not consent to supply him with money, before they had enquired into the grievances of the past eleven years. They proceeded with the investigations in a moderate spirit: but the king, angry at their obstinacy and pertinacity, dissolved the parliament before it had been assembled three weeks.

Assembling of the Long Parliament.

Charles soon found that he was unable to prosecute the war without the assistance of a parliament. He summoned the House of Lords without the lower assembly, and endeavoured to pass the necessary measures by their means alone: but the attempt was a signal failure, and he was obliged to assemble both the houses of parliament. In November, 1640, met the assembly which has received the name of the Long Parliament, and which is the most important meeting of that body that has ever occurred. The members of this parliament were at first united in their opinions, and steadily undertook the reformation of existing abuses. They decreed that no longer interval than three years should elapse without a meeting of parliament; they abolished the Star Chamber and the High Commission; and they impeached the principal councillors by whose ad-

vice the king had acted during the last few years. Archbishop Laud and the Earl of Strafford were imprisoned, and both of them were subsequently executed. After passing these remedial measures, the parliament adjourned for a short time; but, upon its meeting again, the members were not so unanimous as they had been before. The two parties which we have already mentioned took different sides in the deliberations of the Commons, the Royalists receiving the nickname of Cavaliers, and the Republicans that of Roundheads. The first instance of dispute between these two parties occurred, when a proposal was made to present a remonstrance to the king regarding his acts and the feelings of the nation towards him.

CHAP. XVII.

A. D. 1641.

Arrest of the five members, and the commencement of civil war.

The Royalist members were at first the most influential, and Charles, selecting as his advisers Hyde, Falkland, and Colepepper, the most eminent men of that party, promised to do nothing without first obtaining their consent. If he had acted in this manner, further annoyance and dispute would have been prevented, for these persons were not only patriotic lovers of their country, but also staunch adherents of their king. But Charles again broke his word. Without asking the advice of his councillors, he caused five leading members of the popular party to be impeached, and went himself with armed men to seize them in the House of Commons. They had quitted the house a short time previously, and an outbreak

CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1642.

was thus avoided. But the greater part of the nation was now thoroughly roused; the people of London armed themselves; the palace gates were frequently surrounded by furious mobs; the Republican members gained a decided majority in the house and support in the country. The king fled from London, and, although nogotiations were for some time carried on between him and the Parliament, they were perfectly futile—both had gone too far to retract, and civil war began. On the 25th of August 1642, the king unfurled his flag at Nottingham. And now commenced one of the most melancholy contests on record. Englishmen fought against Englishmen, brother against brother, and sons against their father. The land was thoroughly divided, and filled with lamentation, and mourning, and woe.

Relative strength of the parties.

The Royalists were at first triumphant. They were better soldiers than those of the Parliament, and although ill disciplined and impatient of control, they were full of energy and zeal. The north and west of the kingdom were chiefly for the king: London, most of the other great towns, and the southern counties were for the Parliament. Charles's principal military leaders were brave aud dashing cavaliers, but bad generals. His nephews, Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice, were his chief assistants. The army of the Parliament had no better officers. The Earl of Essex who commanded it did nothing to sustain

the great reputation which he had previously acquired on the Continent.

A. D. 1642.

Early successes of the Royalist.

The first encounter took place at Edgehill in the south of Warwickshire, where neither party gained the victory. The Royalists afterwards obtained various successes. The king held his court at Oxford; the surrounding country was submissive to his will; Bristol, then the second town in the kingdom, was in his possession; and his army had advanced within a few miles of London. The Royalists appeared to have gained the mastery, and looked forward to certain triumph at no distant period. At this time, however, they commenced the siege of Gloucester, which somewhat changed the aspect of affairs. The town was defended with gallant pertinacity, and it was eventually relieved by a party of Londoners who, with the Earl of Essex's army, had been sent for its defence. As the forces of the Parliament were returning to London, they met the Royalists at Newbury in Berkshire where a severe battle took place. The most memorable occurrence in that action was the death of the good Lord Falkland. Grieved to the heart at the calamities of his country, he had become sad and dispirited; was often heard to repeat to himself sorrowfully the words, 'Peace, Peace'; and on the morning of the engagement he is said to have anticipated his approaching death.

Notwithstanding several indecisive actions,

CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1644.

Oliver Cromwell and his army.

the cause of the Royalists had hitherto prospered but a change was at this time effected in the army of the Parliament, which speedily gave it the advantage. The republican leaders had generally been found incompetent : but a general of a very different character now came into notice. His name was Oliver Cromwell. He was a man of a stern, resolute, iron will ; he possessed energy which no adversity could daunt, nor prosperity enfeeble ; he was full of zeal and enthuaiasm in what he considered a righteous cause. He had lately commanded a regiment which he had trained into such perfect discipline, that his men were distinguished as the most unflinching soldiers in the army, and had received the epithet of Ironsides. In politics they were thorough Republicans, and in religion Independents. They considered that every religious assembly under its respective minister should be independent of similar assemblies and of the State. They were outwardly full of religious zeal : they attended long sermons between their drills ; their officers led them in devotion as well as in the field; and they marched to battle to the sound of hymns. Nothing could withstand enthusiasm like this. The whole army being modelled after the fashion of Cromwell's regiments, and Cromwell himself having the chief direction of affairs, the cause of the Parliament was soon triumphant. An act called 'The Self-denying Ordinance' was passed. By this all the members of par-

liament who had any military power resigned their commands. Sir Thomas Fairfax was made commander-in-chief of the entire army: but Cromwell, who contrived to get himself exempted from complying with the act, was the leader and director of every movement, and every act. His brave soldiers had defeated the Royalists at Marston Moor, even after part of their own side had been vanquished: and, after the army had been remodelled, a decisive victory was gained at Naseby, the king's troops were thoroughly routed, and Charles himself was obliged to flee. After several ineffectual attempts to regain his lost position, he took refuge during the following year in the Scottish army which had hitherto aided the Parliament, and was now besieging Newark. He remained in their camp several months, during which time he carried on negotiations that proved unsuccessful. He was at length sold to the Parliament by the Scotch, and was detained in captivity until the day of his death.

CHAP. XVII.

A. D. 1645.

The battle of Naseby. July 22d.

After the triumph of the Parliament, the land was in reality under military rule. It was, however, with difficulty that the people were subdued by the Independent army. Risings occurred in several of the southern counties, in Wales, and in the north: but Oliver Cromwell completely subdued all insurrection in the latter places; the disturbances in the south were suppressed by Fairfax, and the stern rule of the army was more powerful than

Ascendancy of the army.

CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1647.

ever. The Parliament was overpowered by its own soldiers, and Cromwell was in all respects their leader and abettor.

Imprisonment of the king.

Soon after the king had fallen into the power of his enemies, a party of soldiers was sent to apprehend him, and he was for some time detained at Hampton Court under charge of the army. Being apprehensive of his life, he contrived to escape from that place to Carisbrooke Castle in the Isle of Wight. While he was there, several overtures were made to him by the Parliament, but they proved ineffectual. The soldiers at length became impatient of delay and negotiations, and, thirsting for blood, demanded his death. The House of Commons was overpowered, and most of the members who were obnoxious to the army were forcibly ejected. King Charles was conveyed to London, and was brought for trial before a revolutionary Court, chiefly composed of the most Republican members of the Commons. Charles never appeared to greater advantage then in this time of adversity and need. He denied the power of the Court to try him; he refused to answer their questions; and he demanded with dignity and courage who had given them authority to try their king. His noble demeanour had no effect upon the wicked men who appeared as his judges. They condemned him to death, and, in a short time after, their sentence was carried into execution.

CHAP. XVII.

A. D. 1649.

The death of Charles the First, January 30th.

The morning of the 30th of January 1649 was cold and gloomy. At an early hour the streets of London were thronged by a grave and anxious multitude, who were kept back by the threatening array of Cromwell's soldiers, as they pressed around the palace at Whitehall, in front of which a scaffold had been erected. King Charles was to die that morning. From the time of his sentence to the moment of his death, he shewed no weakness nor fear. He took leave of two of his children at an affecting interview, and appeared upon the scaffold accompanied by Bishop Juxon, who cheered and comforted him with words of hope, and spoke to him of the happiness which he soon expected to enjoy. "Yes," replied the king, "I am going to exchange an earthly, for a heavenly, crown." With the single word, "remember," upon his lips, his head was severed from his body at one stroke, and the executioner, lifting it up to the gaze of the people, exclaimed "This is the head of a traitor." A deep groan from the spectators testified that that word was untrue, and that they grieved heartily for their fallen king. Charles died, as a Christian, forgiving his enemies and praying for his murderers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE RESTORATION.

From A. D. 1649 to A. D. 1685.

Inauguration of the Commonwealth—The Rump—Cromwell's severity in Ireland—Defeat and narrow escape of Charles the Second—The battles of Dunbar and Worcester—War with the Dutch, and the victories of Blake—Cromwell dissolves the Long Parliament—The session of Barebone's Parliament, and Cromwell made Protector of England—The prowess of Cromwell—His last days and death—The short-lived protectorate of Richard Cromwell—Proceedings of General Monk—The Restoration—Character of Charles the Second—Preliminary measures of the new king—The Act of Uniformity—Foreign policy of the king—Disastrous war with the Dutch—The plague and the fire of London—Alliance with France—The Declaration of Indulgence, and the Test Act—The Popish Plot—The Rye House Plot—Whigs and Tories—Habeas Corpus Act—The melancholy death of Charles the Second.

After the execution of Charles the First the government of the country was continued by the small portion of the House of Commons, which

still remained in existence and which received from the nation the contemptuous nick-name of the Rump. The House of Lords was abolished, and the management of affairs was conducted by a council of forty members who were all zealous republicans and Independents. The majority of the nation was decidedly opposed to the new government: but the army, of which Cromwell was now the commander-in-chief, was too much dreaded in England to admit of open resistance. CHAP. XVIII. A. D. 1649.

Cromwell's severity in Ireland.

In Ireland and Scotland king Charles the Second was publicly proclaimed. Cromwell with a suitable force entered the former country, and speedily conquered the inhabitants with the aid of his invincible soldiers. Several years before, the Irish had rebelled against the late sovereign, and had inhumanly massacred many of the English settlers and their families. The English general gave indulgence to the righteous fury of his followers, and exacted a retribution such as England, strong as she is merciful, will ever continue to exact upon the cowardly murderers of women and children.

The battle of Dunbar. Sep. 3d 1650.

Ireland was pacified by force, and, leaving the work of settlement to his son-in-law, general Ireton, Cromwell departed for Scotland, where Charles the Second, having faithfully promised to uphold that form of religion which the Scotch admired, had been enthroned as king. Cromwell thoroughly

CHAP. XVIII.

A. D. 1651.

defeated the Scotch army near the town of Dunbar. After several unimportant manœuvres, Charles formed the bold design of marching straight into England where he hoped that the Royalists and the Presbyterians would join his force. The movement was daring, but too sudden: the Royalists were unable to assist him, and Cromwell, marching rapidly after the Scotch army, totally defeated it, after a severe engagement, at Worcester. King Charles was obliged to flee, and, after many days of hiding and after several narrow escapes, succeeded in landing upon a foreign shore. One day when he was concealing himself among the branches of a thick oak he saw a party of his pursuers pass beneath his place of retreat, the dense foliage of which completely hid him from their view.

The battle of Worcester. Sept. 3d.

War with the Dutch, and the victories of Blake.

The English Commonwealth was not regarded with favour by foreign states. The national honour, however, was maintained at sea by Admiral Blake, who carried war into the ports of Portugal and Spain, where some Royalist refugees had been received. But soon after he engaged in a severer contest with a stronger foe. The Dutch were then at the height of their naval and commercial greatness, and, as the English representatives had been insulted at the Hague, the Parliament declared war against them. They possessed a large and powerful navy; they had skilful admirals and gallant seamen; but Blake with his English sail-

ors defeated them in almost every encounter. Van Tromp, De Ruyter, and De Wit were successively conquered by the indomitable Blake.

A. D. 1653

Cromwell dissolves the Long Parliament.

April 20th.

The Parliament having fallen into great disrepute among the majority of the people, Cromwell, who had hitherto been the real head of the nation, thought that it was full time for him to assume that power publicly. He had requested the Parliament to dissolve itself: but the members felt little disposed to comply with his command. While, however, they were debating upon the subject, Oliver Cromwell appeared at the House with a party of his soldiers, whom he stationed at the entrance door. Upon entering, he took his usual seat, and, after listening for some time to what was being said, he himself rose to speak. As he became excited with his subject, he began to abuse the leading members of the Parliament, walked up and down the centre of the room, stamping his feet with rage, and calling his opponents names. At an appointed signal the soldiers entered and ejected all the members, Cromwell all the time affirming, in the most hypocritical manner, that he felt exceedingly reluctant to act as he was doing. One person remarked that it was not yet too late to retract, and was immediately placed in custody for his suggestion. When the House had been cleared, Cromwell locked the doors, placed the keys in his pocket, and returned to his own abode.

By one bold and daring stroke Cromwell had

CHAP. XVIII.

A. D. 1653.

The session of Barebone's Parliament, and Cromwell made Protector.

obtained the supreme power in the State. He thought it advisable, however, to rule in conjunction with a parliament, and accordingly assembled members for several towns, who formed a council which, from its foolish actions, made itself ridiculous in the eyes of the people, and by the side of which he himself appeared to greater advantage than before. This assembly was called Barebone's Parliament from the name of one of its members. Cromwell soon dissolved this parliament, and then assumed the power of a king without the name. He was called the Lord High Protector; he was invested with this dignity in solemn state; and he ruled the people in a more absolute manner, than Charles or any other English sovereign had done. He possessed the confidence of the army, and was loved by no other party: but he ruled with a severity and rigour which effectually prevented opposition. He summoned a House of Commons and created a House of Lords, but in the latter expedient he did not succeed as he had done in other matters. But notwithstanding the assistance of his parliament, the supreme power was with Cromwell and with Cromwell alone.

The prowess of Cromwell.

The Protector was dreaded abroad, as he was feared at home. That stern, indomitable will, which had formerly conquered all opponents in his native land, made England and the English name triumphant throughout the world. He finally subdued

the Dutch; he defeated the Spaniards; he punished the Moorish pirates in the Mediterranean Sea; he captured one of the richest islands in the West Indies; he upheld Protestantism throughout the whole of Europe; he supported the oppressed Protestants in France and Piedmont; and he threatened the Pope that English cannon should be heard at Rome, unless persecution and oppression were suppressed. The power of England was as much respected in the days of Cromwell, as it had been in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

His last days and death.

But the man who was thus triumphant in England and in Europe did not lead a happy life. His conscience accused him; the guilt of his ambition and the murder of his king oppressed his spirit; and he who had caused others to be executed for crimes similar to those which he had himself committed, was afraid to move about unattended for fear of an assassin's sword. He died in the year 1658 at the age of fifty-nine, a premature old man, worn out by anxiety and care. He died on the anniversary of the battles of Worcester and Dunbar, which he had always esteemed one of his most fortunate days. The people, uncertain what calamities might succeed his death, lamented it deeply, for they felt that a great, though not a good man had passed from among them.

The short-lived protectorate of Richard Cromwell.

His elder son, Richard Cromwell, succeeded him in the protectorate without opposition: but he had neither the ambition nor the ability of his

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A. D. 1659.

father. He was no favourite with the army, and he was not supported by the goodwill of the people. After a few months of troubled rule, he resigned his high position, and again became a private gentleman. His brother, Henry Cromwell, who had commanded in Ireland, also resigned, and General Monk, the commander-in-chief in Scotland, was the only person of ability who remained in power. The remnant of the Long Parliament was again assembled: but it did not remain long in existence. It was dissolved by the soldiers who had summoned it, and whose authority and power it had despised.

Proceedings of General Monk.

The army being all powerful, it is uncertain how long England would have remained under military rule, had not divisions occurred. That portion of the troops which were in Scotland marched into England, under General Monk, and contributed to restore peace and order in a time of uncertainty and dread. General Lambert, the commander in England, who had emulated the ambition of Cromwell, was made a prisoner: and General Monk, advancing towards London, immediately became the chief personage in the State. As soon as he reached the capital, he expressed his desire to see a free parliament elected, and the members of the Long Parliament, who had been ejected by Cromwell's soldiers before the execution of the king, were reassembled. This assembly, after providing for the continuation of the government, made the

necessary arrangements for assembling a new parliament, and dissolved itself. The next parliament, being composed of members who were unconnected with the government, represented the opinions of the people better than most of those that had precided it. General Monk had in the meantime entered into correspondence with the exiled king, and had determined to effect his restoration; for he knew that the majority of the nation were still in favour of monarchy, and that the return of Prince Charles would prove the only remedy to those evils which threatened the country. He did not mistake the popular feeling. As soon as he informed the House of Commons of his project, the proposal was received with pleasure and applause. Overtures, which were gladly accepted, were made to Charles, and he was invited to return at once to his native land.

The Restoration.

On the 29th of May 1660, Charles the Second landed at Dover, amidst the acclamations of his subjects. The people had disliked the stern rule of the Puritans, and they now welcomed their returning sovereign with enthusiastic joy.

Character of Charles the Second.

But Charles, although he had been a wanderer upon the face of the earth, had not learned from adversity to become a good man or a good king. He was easy, indolent, and luxurious in his habits; he was an utter profligate, and was one of the

CHAP. XVIII. A. D. 1660.

most wicked princes that ever sat upon the throne of England. As soon as he returned to his own country he made General Monk, who had assisted him in regaining his crown, the Duke of Albemarle, and Hyde, who had accompanied him during his exile, the Earl of Clarendon and the Chancellor of the realm. To the latter a principal place in the management of affairs was entrusted, and upon the whole he proved himself the upright and conscientious minister of an ungrateful king.

Preliminary measures of the new king.

One of the first acts of the new sovereign was to inflict deserved retribution on the men who had slain his father: but he testified his abhorrence of Cromwell in an ungracious and unbecoming manner. The Protector's body was exhumed, and submitted to indignity. Many persons looked forward to the disbandment of the army with the greatest apprehension. It was, however, performed without disturbance: the veterans of Cromwell mixed peaceably with their fellow-citizens; and the threatened danger passed quietly away.

The Act of Uniformity.

As soon as all apprehension with regard to the State had been allayed, arrangements were made for the better government of the Church. The members of the English Church had been deprived of their privileges under the administration of Cromwell: but they were now fully reinstated in all their rights, and an act of parliament was passed requiring all those who held any

ecclesiastical preferment to use the book of prayer which had been prepared in the preceding century for the benefit of the nation. By these measures, the ancient mode of government both in Church and State was fully restored, and they gave great satisfaction to the majority of the people, who, wearied by the austerity of the Puritan rule, ran into the opposite extreme, after the return of their king; and, instead of too great strictness of manners, an almost universal depravity prevailed. Some of the best men of any age or country then lived in England: but they were rare and honourable exceptions to the general rule. Bishop Taylor, Evelyn, Baxter, and Boyle had few followers in the goodness and nobleness of their life and character.

Foreign policy of the king.

Charles the Second married Catherine, a princess of Portugal, whom he invariably treated with indifference and contempt. The town of Bombay in India and the fortress of Tangier on the northern coast of Africa formed a portion of her dowry. The marriage was unpopular, and the nation was early dissatisfied with the behaviour of the king, who was as unprincipled with regard to foreign politics as he was in his private life. He formed an intimate connection with Louis the Fourteenth, the powerful king of France, and the indignation of the English people was aroused against him for the subserviency of his conduct towards that sovereign. Dunkirk, a

CHAP. XVIII. A. D. 1665.

town in the Netherlands, which had been taken from Spain by Oliver Cromwell, was sold to the French monarch, and this transaction occasioned great annoyance.

Disastrous war with the Dutch.

War was about the same time waged against the Dutch, and, although the English were victorious in one engagement, the management of affairs was so badly conducted, that the warfare proved exceedingly disastrous to the English arms, and the Dutch fleet actually sailed up the Thames and destroyed several ships which were lying off Chatham. This humiliating event occasioned the downfall of Clarendon, against whom the popular indignation was principally directed. While this inglorious war was proceeding, two heavy calamities befell the city of London, and produced great unhappiness and want throughout the country. A disease of peculiar virulence, called the plague, broke out in the metropolis in the spring of 1665, and continued in that city and in various parts of the land during several months. More than a hundred thousand persons died in London alone, and frequent instances of unexampled misery occurred among the survivors. In the following year, a terrific fire took place, and completed the desolation of London. It lasted for five days: and, as the streets were narrow and the houses chiefly built of wood, the destruction of property was enormous. It is difficult to imagine two more appalling events than the plague and the fire of London.

The plague and the fire of London.

CHAP. XVIII.

A. D. 1668. Alliance with France.

Charles the Second's conduct with regard to foreign affairs subsequently became even more unprincipled than it had hitherto been. Louis the Fourteenth was at that time the most powerful monarch in Europe, and France was rapidly acquiring a pre-eminence over other nations similar to that which Spain had possessed in the preceding century. She was the foremost nation in the world: and her sovereign was eagerly desirous of extending her influence and power. Peace having been concluded with the Dutch, an alliance was made with that nation and the Swedes against the French king, and Louis, unwilling to enter into war with the three allied powers, abandoned a portion of his conquests by a treaty prepared at Aix-la-Chapelle. This coalition was pleasing to the English people: but Charles, anxious to be independent of his Parliament, supported the cause of Louis, and exhibited the unbecoming spectacle of an English king accepting bribes from France. He was encouraged in his unworthy conduct by five ministers as unprincipled as himself, who formed a council which is usually known as the Cabal, from the initial letters of the councillors' names, Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. He agreed, by a secret treaty concluded at Dover, to assist Louis in a war with Holland; to maintain his claims to the Spanish monarchy; and to profess his own belief in the Roman Catholic

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religion. He had neither the manliness nor the honesty to avow to his subjects the last-mentioned portion of the treaty: but he attempted to carry out the other stipulations in the contract. The stern determination of the Dutch, however, defeated the projects of the allied monarchs, and the French, who had invaded Holland by land, were obliged to retreat by the self-sacrificing patriotism of the inhabitants who, rather than see their homes devastated by a foreign enemy, placed the greater part of their country under water by opening the dikes which guard it from the sea.

The declaration of Indulgence, and the Test Act.

The king at length discovered that he was as unable to rule without a Parliament, as his father had been. Before that assembly met, he had by his own authority passed an act giving indulgence to the professors of all religions, which, being repugnant to the feelings of the nation, was repealed by the Parliament, and an enactment was passed compelling every one who held a high appointment to conform to the usages of the English Church. This was called the Test Act. It bore hard upon those who held extreme views on either side: but it was especially directed against the Duke of York, the king's brother and the heir to the crown, and against other Romanists holding public offices.

The Popish Plot.

The latter years of the reign are chiefly remarkable for the numerous plots and pretended plots

against the constitution and the king. The principal of these was a barefaced accusation against the English Roman Catholics, which was concocted by a man of infamous character named Titus Oates. He confidently affirmed and attempted to prove, that a scheme had been prepared for the purpose of overturning the laws and religion of the land. His statements are now disbelieved: but at that time the national indignation against the accused parties was so high, that every absurd rumour against them was credited. The Duke of York was a Romanist, and a large party in the country, desiring to see him excluded from the throne, had in vain attempted to bring in a bill of exclusion for that purpose. Just suspicions against that prince and unjust suspicions against others influenced the minds of the people, and several innocent persons were executed on account of the pretended Popish Plot.

The Rye House Plot.

A real plot was subsequently discovered. The king was to have been assassinated by the conspirators, on his return from Newmarket whither he had gone to see the races, as he passed the Rye House, a small building on the river Lea near Hertford, from which the plot received its name. The Earl of Shaftesbury, the Duke of Monmouth, Lord William Russell, and Algernon Sidney were implicated in the affair: they were, however, not guilty of proposing the assassination of the king, although, disgusted at his arbitrary conduct, they

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A.D. 1683.

had frequently deliberated on the best means of relieving the nation from his tyranny. The two former fled to the continent of Europe: but the two latter were executed. Great sorrow was felt by the people for Lord William Russell who, virtuous and upright in life, met his death with calmness and courage. His wife, tender, loving, and true to her husband in adversity, acted as his secretary throughout his trial.

Whigs and Tories.

During the later parliaments of the reign the two great parties which had hitherto divided the nation assumed the distinctive names of Whig and Tory,—the former are distinguished by a constant desire for changes and reforms; the latter, although they wish to see salutary reforms effected wherever they are really required, are deeply attached to the ancient institutions of the land. In 1679 the important law called the Habeas Corpus Act was passed. By this statute the liberal provisions of Magna Charta were more accurately defined than they had hitherto been, and Englishmen were protected from arbitrary imprisonment, no judge being able to condemn an offender without previous trial.

Habeas Corpus Act.

The melancholy death of Charles the Second.

Charles the Second, tolerated, but neither admired nor loved, by his subjects, died in 1685, and in his last hours he avowed the secret of his religion, which during his lifetime he had concealed. His life, however, shewed plainly

that he did not care for religion at all. The very day on which he was taken ill, he was amusing himself with the most abominable revelry, in the midst of parasites and harlots. Few events have been more awfully instructive than the death of Charles the Second.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE REVOLUTION COMPLETED.

FROM A. D. 1685 TO A. D. 1702.

Accession of James the Second—He makes overtures to the Pope—Antagonism between the people and the king—Insurrection under Monmouth—The Bloody Assizes—Trial of the seven bishops—Overtures to William, Prince of Orange—The prince lands at Torbay—The crown offered to William—The Bill of Rights—Character of William the Third—The Jacobites—The Revolution in Scotland—The Massacre of Glencoe—James the Second in Ireland—Gallant defence of Londonderry—The battle of the Boyne—James flees from Ireland—Grand alliance against France—The peace of Ryswick—A formidable Jacobite conspiracy—The battle of La Hogue—The Triennial Bill—The Act of Settlement—Death of William the Third—Preparations for war with France.

JAMES, the Duke of York, ascended the throne after the death of his brother. Although he was a Roman Catholic, he faithfully promised at his accession not to interfere with the religion or the laws of the nation; but he almost immediately broke

his word, and entered into a negotiation with the Pope with the intention of bringing England once more under papal domination. The reigning Pontiff, however, was wise enough to perceive that the time had not yet arrived for attempting a measure which he foresaw would fail, and advised his impatient supporter to wait for a more convenient season.

Antagonism between the people and the king.

James the Second was as desirous as Charles the Second had been to be independent of his parliament. The late king had been tyrannical: the new one exceeded him in tyranny. Charles had desired to be absolute from indolence and caprice: James desired to be so from premeditated malice. He disliked his people, and his people disliked him. An attempt had been made during his brother's life time to exclude him from the throne on account of his principles, and his subjects did not view him with more favour now that they saw their worst apprehensions fulfilled.

Insurrection under Monmouth.

A formidable insurrection against the king's authority arose soon after his accession. The leaders in it were the Duke of Monmouth, an illegitimate son of Charles the Second, and the Duke of Argyle, who, thinking that the people of England would not contentedly remain under the dominion of a Roman Catholic sovereign, imagined they would meet with the approval of

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the nation and be speedily successful. They were both in Holland whither the Duke of Monmouth had fled after the discovery of the Rye House Plot, and whence they intended to make a simultaneous invasion into Scotland and England. The Duke of Argyle landed in the west of Scotland, and was easily defeated. The Duke of Monmouth disembarked on the coast of Dorsetshire and was received with enthusiasm by the inhabitants of that county and of Somersetshire. He proclaimed himself king, and was joined by many of the peasantry who, armed with their agricultural implements, attempted to offer opposition to the royal forces. An engagement took place at Sedgemoor where Monmouth cowardly deserted his army, and his untrained but courageous followers were thoroughly routed. The king's commanders exercised the most relentless rigour in the pursuit. Even when the heat of battle was over, they refused quarter to the fugitives and desolated the country far and wide: but they were exceeded in severity by Jeffreys, a judge of a thoroughly hateful character, who was directed by the king to conduct the trials of the disaffected. About three hundred prisoners were executed; double that number were transported to undergo misery worse than death in the West Indies; and Jeffreys himself, the queen, and others in authority exacted money from those who were permitted to escape. The Duke of

The Bloody Assizes.

Monmouth was discovered while attempting to hide himself from his pursuers in a ditch, and was put to death as a traitor on Tower Hill. The cruel proceedings of Jeffreys, which have received the appropriate name of 'the bloody assizes,' were approved of by the king who made his obsequious and iniquitous follower the Chancellor of England.

James attempts to restore Romanism.

Meanwhile James imagined that he was making rapid advances towards restoring Romanism. The parliament was subservient to his will; the streets of London were frequented by Romish priests; many high offices were given to Roman Catholics in direct opposition to the Test Act; the king himself attended Roman Catholic services in state; and he fancied that his favourite project was about to be fulfilled: but he forgot that the heart of England was not with him, and that, although appearances might for a time be in his favour, the wishes of the nation could not be completely disregarded. The people hated Romanism with a deadlier hatred than ever.

Trial of the seven bishops.

Regardless, however, of the popular feeling, the king hurried forward in his career of tyranny. He issued a declaration of indulgence, similar to that which had given offence in the former reign, and commanded it to be read on two appointed days in every church. Many of the

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clergy refused to obey his orders. The Archbishop of Canterbury and six of the bishops presented an address, imploring him to withdraw the declaration, and to make no alterations regarding the services of religion without the consent of Parliament. They were imprisoned in the Tower, but after a trial of several hours' duration, they were pronounced not guilty of treason even by the obsequious judges of that time. The acquittal of the bishops was welcomed with shouts and rejoicings in the metropolis. James was at Hounslow, a few miles from London, reviewing his troops, who received the news with joyful acclamations which astonished and alarmed the king. Turning to Lord Feversham, their commander, he asked the meaning of the tumult. "It is nothing, your majesty", was the reply, "but the acquittal of the bishops." "Call you that nothing?" exclaimed the king, "but never mind: it will be so much the worse for them."

Overtures to William, Prince of Orange.

At this time of popular discontent, several influential persons met together to consult about the safety of the nation. The king was evidently determined to rule as the absolute monarch of a Roman Catholic country: his subjects were determined to resist him upon both points. Something ought immediately to be done to pre-

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A. D. 1688.

serve peace in the nation. At this time a son was born to James: but the people in general believed that an imposition had been effected, in order to deceive the nation and to perpetuate the succession to the throne in a Roman Catholic family. An invitation was consequently written to William, Prince of Orange and the principal personage in the Dutch republic, who had married Mary, the king's eldest daughter, requesting him to visit England for the purpose of allaying the apprehensions of the populace and preserving peace in the kingdom.

The prince lands at Torbay. Nov. 5th.

William accepted the invitation, and landed at Torbay on the 5th of November 1688, with an army composed of Dutch and of the English refugees. He was received coldly by the inhabitants of the western counties, who had not forgotten the defeat and cruel persecution which they had endured a few months previously. As he advanced towards London, however, he daily received important additions to his force. The king's most favoured commanders, the courtiers whom he had most befriended, even his very children turned against him. Without love or sympathy to sustain him, he stood alone in his misfortunes; but he had acted with neither firmness nor decision: he was as irresolute in adversity, as he had been implacable in prosperity. When William drew near the capital, James fled precipitately in the disguise of a Roman Catholic priest: but he was disco-

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vered and brought back again to London to the embarassment of William and his supporters. The king fled again, however, with the connivance of his opponents, and took refuge in France, where, after a desperate but ineffectual attempt to regain his throne in Ireland, he ended his days in exile.

The crown offered to William.

As soon as James had in this manner abdicated the throne, members were summoned to form a convention, or kind of parliament, for the purpose of deliberating upon the future management of the government. After some debate it was agreed that a Roman Catholic king was no fit ruler for Protestant England; that James had forfeited his throne by violating the law; and that William and Mary should jointly become the sovereigns of the land. Before their accession the new king and queen assented to certain provisions, called the Declaration of Rights which was, some months afterwards, confirmed in the Bill of Rights and made a portion of the English law. These provisions were intended to secure the maintenance of the liberty and religion of the people, and to defend the nation from tyranny such as it had endured under the preceding kings. The object of the revolution which had been begun in Charles the First's reign was now completed: the lowest subject was preserved from the

The Bill of Rights.

tyranny of the king; the authority of parliaments was rendered indispensable; and the power of the sovereign was limited and strengthened.

Character of William the Third.

William, the newly elected king, was undoubtedly the greatest man of that age. Under a cold, sullen, reserved temper, he concealed an heroic spirit which carried him through difficulties and dangers that almost seemed insurmountable. Calm and cautious to an extreme, he was able to turn even defeat into an advantage, and to render reverses more formidable to his enemies than to himself. His position as king of England was peculiarly difficult. He was entitled to the gratitude of the nation for having preserved its liberties and laws: but he was never a favourite with the people, for his habits were unpopular and his manners unconciliating. Although he had English blood in his veins, for his mother was the daughter of an English king, he was thoroughly Dutch. He spoke with a Dutch accent; he was surrounded by Dutch courtiers; and he was Dutch in his feelings, habits, and tastes. England, moreover, was divided into several parties, and he was obliged to be careful in holding the balance between them: but he filled his difficult post with prudence and tact, and, notwithstanding his manifold disadvantages, he made an admirable ruler, for he understood his position thoroughly, and appreciated the benefits of civil and religious freedom better than his sub-

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jects did. But he appeared to the greatest advantage as the leader of the Protestant party in Europe, and the unwearying opponent of French ambition. At an early age he had animated the Dutch to oppose the French monarch with deadly determination, and, throughout his life, he continued the stedfast enemy of Louis. It was his arm and his intellect that saved Europe from an encroaching foe.

The Jacobites.

The accession of William the Third and Mary was effected without tumult or bloodshed. Serious opposition was afterwards encountered in Ireland but in England all conspiracies and plots were detected, and the revolution completed in peace. A new party called the Jacobites* was at this time formed. Persons holding offices both in Church and in the State were, of course, obliged to take an oath of allegiance to the new sovereign. Many conscientiously refused to take this oath, because they believed that no earthly power was competent to remove a king, and that James, although he had governed badly, was consequently their lawful ruler and William a usurper. The most consistent members of this party were like good Bishop Ken who, although he had had the courage to reprove the wickedness of one king and to withstand the tyranny of another, yet remained faithful to his dethroned sovereign: but the

* From Jacobus, the Latin for James.

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English Jacobites in general were not distinguished for uprightness, intelligence, or strength.

The Revolution in Scotland.

In Scotland, William and Mary were acknowledged by the convention at Edinburgh, as readily as they had been in England. Opposition was offered to their authority in the Highlands: but Lord Dundee, who had defeated General Mackay, William's general, at Killiecrankie, was killed at the moment of victory, and the fortunes of king James's supporters in Scotland fell with him. In order to procure the submission of the Highland chiefs, William promised a free pardon to all who would take the oath of allegiance by a certain day, and threatened to punish those who did not with the severest rigour.

The Massacre of Glencoe.

Macdonald of Glencoe, a chief deeply attached to the cause of the exiled king, was prevented by adverse circumstances from making the required submission in time, although he had intended to do so; and his avowed enemies, the Earl of Breadalbane and the Master of Stair, the king's Scottish ministers, desiring his ruin, informed William of his failure to take the oath, but not of his desire and inability to submit. An order was given for the destruction of Macdonald and all his adherents: and a party of soldiers was sent to the valley of Glencoe, where, after they had remained for a fortnight in familiar intercourse with the

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inhabitants, they fulfilled their cruel commission, and, rising at midnight, with peculiar malignity slew men, women, children, all who dwelt in that fatal valley. This act, whether his permission was intentional or not, is a dark blot on the character of William.

James the Second in Ireland.

In the year after his flight, James the Second made a determined attempt to regain his throne. The Irish, who were mostly Roman Catholics, still acknowledged him as their king: but he could not have selected a worse spot for his attempt, for the sympathies of the English were with the English settlers in Ireland and not with the Irish themselves, and he would, if victorious, have lost more in England than he could have gained in Ireland. He was assisted in his expedition by Louis who afforded him a plentiful supply of arms and ammunition. In a short time all Ireland, with the exception of Ulster, was subdued; James assembled a parliament at Dublin; issued money in his own name; and appeared to have gained completely the object of his enterprise.

Gallant defence of Londonderry.

But he was successfully resisted in Ulster; and the manner in which the citizens of Londonderry held out against his army affords one of the noblest instances of courage and endurance that Englishmen have ever displayed. The same indomitable spirit, which exhibits itself most gloriously in the midst of the greatest dangers, sustained the

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garrison of Londonderry, as, in later times, it sustained the garrison of Lucknow. Honour and duty demanded them to die rather than to yield: and, though overwhelmed by the numbers of their foes, though famine, pestilence, and death menaced them, they endured to the end and were victorious. The besiegers and the besieged fought furiously: but, as in most of the sorties the advantage was with the latter, and a most determined assault had been vigorously repulsed, the siege was converted into a blockade. Every precaution was taken to prevent the garrison from receiving supplies; every approach to the city was guarded; and a boom made of logs of fir-wood firmly bound together was stretched across the river on which the town was situated to prevent succour reaching it from the sea. The distress in the city was extreme: horseflesh was common food, and the garrison were often compelled to partake of even fouler fare than that. Disease appeared among their ranks; their ammunition was exhausted; their feelings were appealed to by the hideous cruelty of the French commander, who placed many of his prisoners between the city and the camp, and allowed some of them to die of hunger there: but the brave defenders remained firm. They might die: they would not yield. Defences that were destroyed during the day were repaired at night; and the sentinels, though scarcely able

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to walk their rounds from hunger and fatigue, fought with their assailants to the last. At length deliverance drew near. On the 30th of July, when the siege had lasted three months and a half, three vessels were seen approaching the boom. They were English ships coming to their rescue. The battlements were crowded with wan, famished figures, watching eagerly the course of the foremost ship which was bounding towards the boom. She drew near. She rushed against the barrier which burst asunder with the shock—and the city and the garrison were saved. Out of the seven thousand men that had crowded the town at the commencement of the siege only three thousand had survived.

The battle of the Boyne. July 1st 1690.

In the following year William was able to proceed in person to command the English army in Ireland, and the aspect of affairs was speedily changed. A few days after he had landed in that country, he met the Irish forces upon the banks of the river Boyne. The battle was severely contested; but it ended in the English being victorious. King William, calm and self-collected, was in the thickest of the fight: but James, who had surveyed the scene of battle from a neighbouring height, turned his horse's head from the field as soon as he saw that his opponents were prevailing, and did not stay his flight until he reached Dublin, whence he

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soon after departed for France. In the following September William returned to London, leaving the direction of the war to Ginkell, a Dutch general. The warfare that ensued was unfavourable to James's adherents, and they were gradually overcome, until the city of Limerick alone remained to the exiled king. Upon the capitulation of that city, the garrison were permitted to choose whether they would serve king William or king James. The greater number, adhering to the fallen cause of the latter, departed for France, where they entered into the service of the French sovereign, and formed one of the bravest brigades in his army.

Grand alliance against France.

William visited his native country in the same year, to meet his colleagues in a war against France. The ambition of the French monarch had been increasing, and he had lately waged war in the most merciless manner against the inhabitants of the Palatinate, a part of Germany which was in the neighbourhood of his dominions. He had desolated the country, and had destroyed many flourishing towns. The wickedness of this act and the danger which threatened Europe from Louis' guilty ambition, induced several of the European sovereigns to form a coalition against him. William was the real leader of this confederacy, and he exercised his power with consummate tact. The admirable manner in which he conciliated his numerous associates and soothed their prejudices,

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and the extraordinary ability which he displayed in repairing defeats, enabled him to frustrate the designs of Louis and to obtain a favourable treaty. In 1697 peace was concluded at Ryswick near the Hague, when the French king agreed to acknowledge the existing Government of England, and to recognize King William's title to the crown.

Formidable Jacobite conspiracy.

While William was in Holland a formidable conspiracy against his power was discovered. The principal Jacobites had invited James to return to his kingdom; the Earl of Marlborough proved a thorough traitor to the cause which he had voluntarily espoused; the Princess Anne had entered into correspondence with her father; and many of the officers of the navy were reported to be disaffected. A French army was encamped at La Hogue, ready for the invasion of England. A French fleet was in the Channel, ready to assist in the expedition. But the spirit of the English people rose. The Jacobites might desire the return of James: only one or two traitors here and there would desire to see him return with a French army. The national hatred to France made itself distinctly heard. Queen Mary, who had charge of the government during her husband's absence, acted with frankness and address. She placed Marlborough in arrest; she appealed to the honor of the naval officers; and she assured them that she reposed entire confidence in

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The battle of La Hogue. May 19th.

their loyalty and courage. This spirited appeal touched the hearts of all who heard it. Admiral, captains, sailors, even if any had wavered before, now determined to do their duty bravely and to fight for their country and their Queen. The first commander who steered his ship into the midst of the French line was mortally wounded; but remained upon the deck to encourage his crew. "Fight the ship," he exhorted them with his last breath; "fight the ship as long as she can swim." The French fleet was defeated and almost destroyed, and the English sailors followed up the victory, and burnt the French vessels that had escaped, close to the camp of the French army which was to have invaded England. James's projected invasion was effectually frustrated by this engagement.

The Triennial Bill.

Several improvements were made in the English constitution during William the Third's reign. The Bill of Rights has been already mentioned. Two other important statutes were the Triennial Bill and the Act of Settlement. The former provided that a new parliament should be assembled every three years, and was intended to prevent an occurrence like the long parliament in Charles the Second's reign, which lasted for seventeen years, from being again repeated. A constant change among the members of parliament would afford the people a better representation of

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their feelings on political matters, than if the same persons were to sit in that assembly for several years.

The Act of Settlement.

The Act of Settlement decreed that the crown should pass, after the death of the present sovereign and of the Princess Anne without offspring, to Sophia, Electress of Hanover and grand-daughter of James the First, and to her descendants, provided that they should not belong to the Church of Rome. Other salutary provisions limiting the power of the new race of kings were inserted in this statute, which Mr. Hallam justly calls the seal of the English constitutional laws. It was the last in a series of enactments which secured the people from the oppression that absolute monarchs too frequently employ. With this law and with the Bill of Rights ended the contest between the parliament and the crown, which had lasted in various degrees from the reign of John, and had reached its full development in the time of James. The authority of each was clearly defined; and the constitution of England consolidated and strengthened.

Death of William the Third. March 8th 1702.

The life of England's energetic ruler was drawing to a close. As he was one day riding in Bushy Park near London, his horse fell with him, and he broke his collar-bone. He was recovering from the effects of this accident, when he was attacked with fever, of which he died in a few

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days. Queen Mary, his beloved wife, had died seven years before.

Preparations for war with France.

The late war against France had not suppressed the ambition of the French sovereign; and, shortly before the death of William, a second grand alliance was formed against that nation, which was planned and supported by the English king, although hostilities were not declared until the succeeding reign. The principal object of the war was to preserve a balance of power in Europe, to prevent the military might of France, which was at that time greater than that of any other nation, from becoming too formidable. The king of Spain died in 1700, and bequeathed his crown to the Duke of Anjou, a grandson of Louis the Fourteenth, and the extensive dominions of Spain were thereby added to the possessions of the royal family of France. By this arrangement the danger to the rest of Europe was increased, and no country was likely to suffer more than England, if the projects of the French monarch were allowed to remain undisturbed. Upon the death of James he had proclaimed the exiled sovereign's youthful son as king of England, contrary to the provisions of the treaty of Ryswick, and had given great offence to the English people. William, therefore, appears perfectly justified in preparing a confederacy to oppose the designs of Louis, and in leaving to his successor a heritage of war.

CHAPTER XX.

WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION.

From A. D. 1702 to A. D. 1727.

The accession of Queen Anne—Conflict between the Whigs and Tories—Commencement of the war—Character of Marlborough—Marlborough's opening campaign—The battle of Blenheim—The capture of Gibraltar—Union with Scotland—The battle of Ramillies—The campaign in Catalonia—Further victories of Marlborough—Plots against the Whigs—Mrs. Masham—Fall of the Godolphin ministry—The peace of Utrecht—The royal succession—Accession of George the First—A Jacobite rebellion—The battle of Sheriffmuir—The Septennial Act—The South Sea Bubble—Conclusion of the reign—Literary characteristics of the age.

The Princess Anne, a younger sister of Queen Mary, succeeded her brother-in-law on the English throne. She was a lady of pleasing manners and affable disposition, anxious for the welfare of her subjects; but of a weak and pliant character which rendered her peculiarly susceptible to the influence of favourites. Lady Marlborough, who had been high in her favour for many years,

was her most intimate friend at the time of her accession.

Conflict between the Whigs and Tories.

The two great parties of Whigs and Tories contended for power with bitter virulence throughout her reign. Her first ministry was under the direction of Lord Godolphin and the Earl of Marlborough, who, although at first Tories in name, were, in reality, Whigs. They remained in power for several years, and were afterwards overthrown by the disgraceful animosity of their rivals, who seemed to prefer the advancement of their party to the interests of the country.

Commencement of the war.

The queen and her ministers agreed to carry into effect the wishes of William the Third, and to declare war against France and Spain. The grand alliance between England, Austria, and Holland was concluded, and war was declared on the same day at London, Vienna, and the Hague. The Earl of Marlborough was appointed the commander-in-chief of the Dutch and English armies, which were to co-operate with the Austrian army under Prince Eugene, while a fleet commanded by Sir George Rooke was sent to attack the town of Cadiz and to watch the ports of Spain.

Character of the Earl of Marlborough.

The Earl of Marlborough was a very remarkable man. Gifted with rare self-control and a clear, keen intellect, he was, with one exception, England's greatest general. He was singularly calm and self-reliant in the hour of danger; he

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had a pleasing, firm, persuasive address; and he was as bold and ready in forming his designs, as he was rapid in performing them. In the succeeding war, of which he was the life and soul, he was equally eminent for the tact with which he influenced the minds of his confederates, and for the courage and skill with which he gained his brilliant victories and maintained the honour of the English name. But the evil of Marlborough's character was as conspicuous as the good. It was disfigured by the vice of avarice and by the guilt of treachery. Even while he held office under William, he secretly corresponded with the exiled monarch, who had befriended him in youth and whom he had shamefully deserted in the hour of need.

Marlborough's opening campaign.

Marlborough's operations were at first confined to the Spanish Netherlands, where his opening campaign was completely successful. He drove back the French from the frontiers of Holland; he re-opened the navigation of the river Meuse; and, capturing Liege and other important towns, he effectually protected the United Provinces from French invasion. For these services he was created a Duke, and received the thanks of the Houses of Parliament. Meanwhile the expedition against Spain had not been successful. The attack on Cadiz failed, and no further attempt was made on the Spanish coast, although the

neighbouring seas were in possession of the English fleet.

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The battle of Blenheim. August 13.

In the campaign of 1704 Marlborough was again engaged in the Netherlands: but, hearing that the French, who had entered into alliance with the Elector of Bavaria, were about to attack the dominions of the Emperor of Germany in that quarter, he made a bold and rapid march from the Netherlands to the Danube, where he joined the Austrian army under Prince Louis of Baden and Prince Eugene, and totally defeated the French and Bavarian forces at Blenheim. The French were posted in great numbers at the village of that name, which was the key of their position. After a severe contest the Bavarians gave way, and the greater part of the French, who had been thrice assaulted by the English in vain, were left unsupported in the village, where they were surrounded by the victorious army and taken prisoners. The loss of life in this battle was enormous: but the defeat completely frustrated the designs of Louis, and gave the advantage to the allies. More than 13,000 of the French were taken prisoners; 10,000 were slain on the field of battle; and a large number were drowned in attempting to cross the Danube. The Archduke Charles of Austria who laid claim to the Spanish crown and was supported by the allies, attempted to invade Spain from Portugal, and an English fleet was sent to assist him in his enterprise. He

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was unsuccessful: but the English gained one of their most important conquests during the campaign. Sir George Rooke took Gibraltar, a strong fortress at the entrance to the Mediterranean. It has ever since remained in the possession of his country, and has proved the most useful of England's naval and military stations.

The capture of Gibraltar.

Union with Scotland.

A salutary measure was about this time effected in England and Scotland. The two countries which had for many years been under the government of the same king were united. They had hitherto had two parliaments, and might have been considered as two distinct nations. By the act of union it was decreed that there should henceforward be only one parliament for both countries, which was to receive the addition of sixteen Scotch peers and forty-five Scotch members of the House of Commons; the united kingdom was to be called Great Britain; and the ruler was to be the next Protestant heir, according to the provisions of the Act of Settlement.

The battle of Ramillies. May 23rd 1706.

The war on the Continent still continued. Marlborough was again victorious over the French at Ramillies in Flanders. The French general, having stationed the left flank of his army behind a morass, where, although it was safe from attack, it was prevented from attacking, Marlborough was able to concentrate the whole of his forces upon the village of Ramillies which the French

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then held. The position was carried by assault, and the allied cavalry pursued their retreating opponents for several miles, capturing all the artillery and baggage.

The campaign in Catalonia.

In the same year the Earl of Peterborough, an eccentric but chivalrous soldier, accompanied the Archduke Charles in an invasion of the eastern coast of Spain, where the people of the province of Catalonia were favourable to his cause. The rapid victories of the Earl confused and alarmed the Spaniards: but his triumphant campaign was of short duration, for he was superseded by another general who was as unfortunate as he had been successful. During the two following years Marlborough again overcame his French opponents. The battles of Oudenarde and Malplaquet, and the capture of Lisle completely wrested Flanders from the power of the French. The northern frontier of France was left comparatively unprotected; and, if Marlborough had not been thwarted by his political opponents in England, he would probably have ended the war in Louis' own dominions.

Further victories of Marlborough.

Plots against the Whigs.

A Whig administration had hitherto been in power in England: but it was at this time endangered by the intrigues of the Tories. Mr. Harley, afterwards the Earl of Oxford, and Mr. St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, two most distinguished, but most unprincipled, statesmen,

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who had formerly belonged to the ministry of which Marlborough and Godolphin were the chiefs, began to plot for the overthrow of their former friends. The queen, tired of her haughty favourite, the Duchess of Marlborough, had taken Mrs. Masham, a lady who had lately been introduced to her by the duchess, into her confidence and favour. Mrs Masham assisted Harley to the utmost of her power, and induced the queen, not against her will, to support the Tories. The popular feeling also was on the side of the same party. This was exemplified in a curious manner. Dr. Sacheverell, a clergyman of no great influence, preached a discourse in which he spoke against the Revolution and king William, and abused the present ministry. Lord Godolphin inconsiderately prosecuted Dr. Sacheverell who was supported by the populace and many of the clergy. He was found guilty of sedition by the House of Peers, before whom he was tried : but the sentence imposed upon him was so lenient, that it was considered a triumph by the Tories.

Fall of the Godolphin ministry.

Soon afterwards the ministry of Lord Godolphin soon fell ; and Marlborough, who had again distinguished himself in warfare with the French, was dismissed from his command, and was received by the people of England on his return with such thorough ingratitude, that he removed to Antwerp, where he lived for many months in retirement.

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The Peace of Utrecht.

One of the first objects of the new administration was to ensure peace with France. After much discussion and many hinderances, peace was concluded at Utrecht in Holland. The persons who negotiated this treaty have been frequently blamed for their conduct in the matter, because the terms of it were more favourable to the French monarch than what he himself had previously proposed. They were prejudicial to the interests of the allies, and were undoubtedly the result of party spirit. The real object of the war was abandoned; the crown of Spain was continued in the royal family of France; but it was agreed that the two countries should not be governed by the same sovereign.

Chances of the royal succession.

After the conclusion of the peace of Utrecht, which had been principally the work of Lord Bolingbroke, the chief object which engaged the attention of the nation was the royal succession. Queen Anne's health was failing; she had no children; and a successor might soon be required to fill her place on the English throne. An act of parliament had declared the Elector of Hanover the next heir to the crown: but the Jacobites had lately become more numerous and influential than they had been at first. Many of the queen's ministers, and especially Lord Bolingbroke, were Jacobites at heart; a powerful party were ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity

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that might occur for effecting their object; and the queen herself is supposed to have felt no great disinclination to the idea of her brother's success. But, whatever the Jacobite party might suppose, at least three fourths of the nation were in favour of the Protestant succession. A division on this subject occurred also in the ministry. The Earl of Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke came to an open quarrel, and the former was dismissed from his office by the queen. But whatever Lord Bolingbroke and his party may have intended was completely frustrated by the dexterity of the Whigs. All their plans were well concerted: and, when the queen was upon her death-bed, two of the most eminent of the party introduced the Duke of Shrewsbury to her as a minister perfectly suited for the crisis. The former ministry was suddenly dimissed, and the Whigs being in power, their design of summoning the Elector of Hanover to England was effected, and the Protestant succession secured.

Accession of George the First.

A few weeks after the death of queen Anne, the new sovereign arrived in England. His manners were far from prepossessing; he could not speak a word of English; and he was far more attached to his German principality than to his new kingdom. He possessed good abilities, but had neither taste nor learning. He was never a favourite with his subjects. The language

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which he spoke was German, and his habits were thoroughly German.

A Jacobite rebellion.

The first great event of the reign was an insurrection in favour of James the Second's son. It broke out in the north, where the power of the Jacobites was stronger than in the south. The Earl of Mar, under the pretence of a hunting party, summoned many of the Highland chiefs to a council of war, and raised the standard of rebellion at Braemar. A simultaneous rising took place in Northumberland and in the south of Scotland, where Mr. Forster, a Protestant gentleman of property, was elected leader of the Jacobites. He was attacked by the king's troops at Preston; the town, in which he had posted himself, was surrounded; and he was captured with the greater part of his followers. The Duke of Argyle engaged the hastily levied forces of the Earl of Mar at Sheriffmuir, where a drawn battle took place. The left wing of each army was defeated by its opponents, but the inability and negligence of the Jacobite general prevented him from taking advantage of the small numbers of the remnant of the royal army, which might have been easily overcome. The Highlanders fought desperately: but they had a faint-hearted and incapable chief. Part of both armies ran away, and consequently both claimed the victory. No other engagement took place during the rebellion. The Pretender, as the son of

The battle of Sheriffmuir.

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James the Second is usually called for laying claim to the English throne, visited Scotland, where he remained for a short time: but his manners were more unpopular than those even of George the First. He was silent and reserved; when he spoke, it was only of his wrongs; he gave his followers little encouragement; and seemed to take little interest even in an enterprise undertaken in support of his own cause. The movement in his favour was not directed by any person of ability, and was consequently a decided failure. But few executions followed this outbreak. The Earl of Derwentwater, a young nobleman living in the north of England, was one of the most eminent of those who were executed. Lord Nithisdale, who was found guilty of treason, was saved by the devotion of his wife, who entered his prison, and contrived to effect his escape in the disguise of a lady's dress.

The Septenni- Act.

At this time the ministry effected a change in the law regarding the duration of parliaments. Twenty years before, the Triennial Bill, ordaining that a parliament should be assembled every three years, was carried. It was thought, however, that seven years would be a better length for parliaments to last and would afford enough opportunity for the different towns to change their representatives at

pleasure. The present parliament had been three years in existence, and it would have been very dangerous to the safety of the nation if it had been dissolved while the rebellion lasted. The Septennial Act was, therefore, proposed, and it has ever since been the law of the country.

The South Sea Bubble.

A most remarkable desire for speculation at this time affected the nation. An extraordinary scheme, called the South Sea Company for promoting commerce with the ports on the South Seas, was the means of deluding several thousands of people, by professing to pay off the national debt, which had been incurred by Government for the prosecution of the late war against France, and to enrich all who were concerned in the company. Various other wild schemes were started, and all were as entirely devoid of credit as the original South Sea scheme.

Conclusion of the reign.

A desultory war with Spain occupied a few years of the reign. An expedition was at one time undertaken by the Spanish government in favour of the Pretender: but it was speedily abandoned. George the First died in the year 1727, while he was paying a visit to his continental dominions. He was in his travelling carriage, hastening to his brother's residence at

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Osnaburgh, when he was attacked by a rapidly fatal stroke of paralysis, and he did not reach that place alive.

Literary characteristics of the age.

The period of which we have been writing was graced by several distinguished authors. Addison, Swift, Steele, Bolingbroke, and Pope exhibited, in different styles and in varied measures, the admirable power and richness of the English tongue.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE EXPEDITION OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD.

FROM A. D. 1727 TO A. D. 1760.

The beginning of George the Second's reign—Sir Robert Walpole's ministry—War with Spain—Retirement of Walpole—Warfare on the Continent of Europe—The battle of Dettingen—Campaign in Flanders—The battle of Fontenoy—The French over-run Flanders—The enterprise of Prince Charles Edward—Raises his standard in the Highlands—The Highlands of Scotland—Enthusiasm of the Highlanders in the Prince's cause—Early successes of the young Pretender—The battle of Preston Pans—The stay at Edinburgh—The march to Derby—The retreat—The siege of Stirling—The battle of Falkirk—The Duke of Cumberland in Scotland—The battle of Culloden—The wanderings of Prince Charles—The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle—The conquest of Canada—The capture of Quebec—The battle of Minden—Admiral Hawke—The death of George the Second.

THE first ten years of George the Second's reign were peaceable and quiet. Sir Robert Walpole, who had risen to celebrity in the preced-

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ing reign was the prime minister; and, although his administration was not brilliant, it was successful. Queen Caroline, the amiable wife of George the Second, took a large share in the management of public affairs, and frequently governed the kingdom during the absence of the king in Hanover, where he often resided for the purpose of personally managing his dominions on the Continent.

War with Spain.

Sir Robert Walpole was obliged to resign his office, in consequence of an outcry which was raised against him by the people. War had been declared against Spain, because that nation had broken a commercial treaty that had been entered into with England. The war had been denounced by Walpole, and, when it had lasted for some time without success, he was accused of not exerting himself in carrying on hostilities. He became a peer under the name of the Earl of Oxford: but lost his high position as minister. During this period Captain Anson, the commodore of an English fleet, sailed round the world, and, by his energy and daring in adventure and war, upheld the high character for enterprise which English sailors had previously attained.

Warfare on the Continent.

In the year of Walpole's retirement, war broke out between the principal powers of Europe. Charles the Sixth, the Emperor of Germany, who, when Achduke, had a few years before contended

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for the crown of Spain, died in the preceding year, and was succeeded by his only daughter, Maria Theresa. That princess was opposed by the elector of Bavaria, who was assisted by the king of France, while England took the part of Maria Theresa, and sent an army to the continent to maintain her cause.

The battle of Dettingen. June 27th.

The king and his second son, the Duke of Cumberland, joined the English troops near the river Maine. Upon their arrival, they found that the army was in imminent danger, being placed in a dangerous position, and commanded by an incompetent general. While retreating to a more favourable position, the French attacked them impetuously, and were completely defeated. The king himself led the English soldiers forward, and both he and his son were among the bravest there. In consequence of this victory, the French were obliged to retire from Germany.

Campaign in Flanders.

The campaign of 1745 began in Flanders, where 76,000 French troops commanded by Marshal de Saxe laid siege to Tournay. The first object of the allies was to relieve that important city, and, accordingly, the Duke of Cumberland, who had been appointed to the chief command of the combined forces, advanced towards the enemy's position. That position was very strong. A small village named Fontenoy was in their front; another village and

The battle of Fontenoy. May 11th, 1745.

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the river Scheldt on their right; and a thick wood on their left. The Dutch agreed to attack the enemy's positions on the right and front, while the Duke of Cumberland was to advance against the left. The Dutch miserably failed in their attempt, and until the end of the action remained at some distance from the field, without an effort to assist their companions in arms. An English detachment, which was sent to carry the little wood on the French left, failed through the neglect of the commander to obey his orders: but the steady advance of the English through the difficult ravine before them was irresistible. The French had men opposed to them who had fought at Ramillies and Blenheim. The defile was narrow, and the advancing columns were compelled to keep together in a firm and solid mass which, step by step, gained ground against their gallant foes. Their ranks were, every moment, thinned by a murderous cross-fire; each charge of the French cavalry was steadily repulsed; each French battalion, as it came in contact with the English, gave way. The day was almost won. The slightest assistance from the sluggardly Dutch would have ensured the victory, but they had been too thoroughly cowed by their defeat to permit of their moving one step towards their allies, who, hard-pressed and exhausted, were nearly overpowered by superior numbers.

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The French victorious.

The French marshal, thinking that the day was lost, repeatedly urged the king and his son, who had been spectators of the engagement, to flee from the battle-field: but, on their refusing to comply with his request, he made a final effort to repulse the English by bringing up the troops who were watching the Dutch, and every man of the reserve. Fairly overpowered, the English at last gave way, retreating, as they had advanced, slowly and deliberately with their faces to the foe. Such a defeat was almost equal to a victory: and, although it had an evil influence on the fortunes of the war, the courage and the honour of the English remained unsullied.

The French over-run Flanders.

This battle rendered the French victorious in Flanders. Tournay, Ghent, and Ostend were successively taken, and the allies could only act on the defensive against their successful opponents. Meanwhile the greater part of the English forces were withdrawn to England, where they were more urgently required than in Flanders, and the approach of the cold weather put an end to the campaign.

The enterprise of Prince Charles Edward.

The war with France and the consequent employment of the English troops on the Continent, afforded the Jacobites a favourable opportunity for renewing their designs against the Government of England. Prince Charles Ed-

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ward, the son of the Pretender, was in France, and, failing in his endeavours to gain the assistance of the French sovereign, determined to carry out the plan which he had before entertained of restoring his father by the means of his own subjects alone. The Jacobite interest was stronger in Scotland than in any other part of the island, and he consequently determined to land in that country, and to throw himself upon the affection and loyalty of the Highlanders. Leaving France in a merchant vessel which had been placed at his disposal by a friend, and evading the English ships of war in the Channel, he disembarked on the western coast of Scotland with a few faithful followers.

Raises his standard in the Highlands.

He did quite right in trusting to the affection of his fellow countrymen. Descended from the ancient line of Scottish kings, and bearing a name dear to the hearts of the people, he was received in the Highlands with enthusiasm. Cameron of Lochiel and other influential chieftains upheld his cause, and they were supported by their clansmen and retainers. In a secluded valley of the Highlands, Charles Edward raised his standard in the presence of many of the Highland chieftains, on the 19th of August 1745.

The Highlands of Scotland.

The Highlanders of Scotland inhabit a wild and rugged tract to the north and west of that country. Living in this isolated region, they have

long retained their ancient simplicity of manners and roughness of demeanour; and, inhabiting a barren and mountainous country, they have been equally distinguished for their hardiness and courage. Their notions of honour and honesty were, however, of an equivocal nature, and their bravery was too frequently shewn in internal feuds and thieving excursions into the neighbouring lowlands. They are divided into clans, or tribes connected by family ties, and the lower orders are devotedly attached to the head of their clan, and follow him whithersoever he goes with unwearying faithfulness. A milder form of the feudal connections which we mentioned in the early ages of the Conquest, existed among the Highlanders.

Enthusiasm of the Highlanders in the Prince's cause.

Prince Charles Edward, with his handsome face and winning manners, completely gained the hearts of this simple people. He learned a few sentences of their language; he chatted gaily with them on the march; he shared their hardships; and entered with spirit into their prejudices and feelings. Conscious that they had entered into the gallant enterprise of a gallant prince, who had resolved to succeed or perish, as he told them, sword in hand, they followed his standard with alacrity, and entertained towards him more even than the love of soldiers to their leader. The feeling of most towards him was that

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of the woman who had lost her sons in his service, and who said that she would cheerfully

"bear them all again,
"And lose them all for Charlie."

Early success of the Young Pretender.

While the young prince was preparing to descend upon the Lowlands, the English Government both in England and Scotland failed to act with promptitude and vigour. Sir John Cope, the commander-in-chief in Scotland, was a well-meaning, but dull and incapable officer. He marched towards the advancing Highlanders: but, instead of engaging them immediately, he avoided a battle and retired to Inverness, thereby leaving the road to the capital open. Although he left an enemy in his rear, the young Pretender adopted the bold plan of marching straight to Edinburgh, where he knew that, notwithstanding he had many enemies, he still had many friends. Two regiments of dragoons belonging to Sir John Cope's army, which had been left behind, as the country where the general had gone was too rugged for cavalry, disgracefully ran away upon the Highlanders' approach: and the Prince, entering the city without opposition, took up his quarters in the palace of Holyrood, where his ancestors, the Scottish kings, had formerly resided; and where with revelry, dance, and song, the Jacobites of Edinburgh welcomed back their prince from exile.

In a few days Sir John Cope, perceiving his

The battle of Preston Pans. Sept. 21st.

mistake, returned to offer battle to the Highlanders. The two armies came in sight of each other near the village of Preston Pans, and on the following morning, the prince advanced to the attack, himself leading the second line. The Highlanders rushed at the royal troops with a terrific yell. The artillery men were driven from their guns at the first charge; the cavalry fled with as disgraceful a precipitation as they had exhibited a few days before, and the infantry, though they made a brave stand for a short time, were forced back and routed. Several curious instances of the half civilized nature of the Highlanders occurred after this engagement, and many of the Prince's untrained force deserted to their mountain homes to hide their plunder.

The stay at Edinburgh.

After this rapid and decisive victory, the Prince returned to Edinburgh, which he entered in triumph. The white cockades which the Jacobites wore appeared in greater profusion than before in the streets of the capital, and Charles again took up his quarters in the palace of his ancestors, where he exercised the functions of royalty in his father's name. He desired to advance to England, but so many of his followers had deserted, and so many more were still expected to join his army, that his advisers begged him to defer the intended expedition.

The march to Derby.

At length when he had been more than month in Edinburgh, the forward movement

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which he had so long desired was begun. The advance was made in a skilful and orderly manner. No acts of plundering or ill-usage took place, and the English forces were quietly and skilfully eluded. Marshal Wade with a large army was at Newcastle, and the Duke of Cumberland, in the centre of the kingdom, was collecting a tolerable force, which was augmented by Dutch and other auxiliaries. Feigning to advance towards Newcastle, the young Pretender turned off to the left of Marshal Wade's army, and, entering Cumberland, laid siege to Carlisle which speedily capitulated. Advancing rapidly southward, the Highlanders entered Manchester, where the Prince was received with enthusiasm. In a few days he arrived at Derby, which is about 130 miles from London, and Lord George Murray, who commanded the Highland army, avoiding the Duke of Cumberland's force by a skilful manœuvre, the Highland army interposed between the capital and that nobleman.

The retreat.

In a short time the Young Pretender might be in London. There was nothing to oppose his progress; the forces prepared for the defence of the city were scarcely collected; and the Londoners were looking forward to his arrival with considerable apprehension. At Derby, however, the Prince's advisers compelled him to retreat. They maintained that his cause was hopeless; that no armament had arrived from France to

assist him in his enterprise; that the English Jacobites had not risen as he had expected; that the people generally looked upon his expedition with supreme indifference; that his advance had, in fact, been too bold and too rapid. The Prince consented to retreat with a sad heart, though he could not agree with them regarding the necessity for that measure. His return to Scotland was a perfect contrast to that of his forward march. He himself, instead of walking, as he had done before, at the head of his troops to cheer and encourage them, lingered in the rear, and his face was sad and sorrowful; and his followers, instead of their former steady behaviour, committed many acts of violence and outrage. A few skirmishes took place between the retreating Highlanders and some of the Duke of Cumberland's forces, but their march was not often molested. The Prince returned to Scotland within two months of his leaving Edinburgh on his courageous and adventurous expedition, during which his force at no time exceeded five thousand men.

The siege of Stirling.

The state of affairs in that country demanded his urgent attention; for since his departure the Government had made an effort to collect a sufficient force to oppose his adherents, and Glasgow and other influential cities shewed their hostility to his cause. The castle of Edinburgh and the stronghold at Stirling were held by English

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garrisons, and the first object of the Prince was to reduce the latter place. This undertaking took longer time than he had expected, and in the meanwhile General Hawley, who, at the Duke of Cumberland's suggestion, had been appointed to the chief command, drew near to give him battle and to relieve the city. General Hawley was a cruel and unskilful leader. He neglected to take common precautions to ensure success, and he treated his soldiers with great severity after a defeat that was caused by his own carelessness as much as by the courage of the enemy. When

The battle of Falkirk. Jan. 17th.

the Highlanders drewnear his encampment, he was absent from his post, and the arrangements for battle were hastily and badly made. The Prince, by a well executed feint, succeeded in deceiving the English general, and in making an attack from a quarter where he was not expected. Rain was falling at the time, and he contrived to advance in the direction of the wind which drove the rain in the faces of the English soldiers. As at Preston, the cavalry were the first to flee, and the greater part of the infantry followed their example; but a few remained firm, and, although they were obliged to retreat, retreated in good order.

The Duke of Cumberland in Scotland.

The Duke of Cumberland, who had been withdrawn to the south of England in consequence of the expected French invasion, was immediately sent to Scotland to retrieve this disaster; but, two days after his arrival, the Prince's army raised

the siege of Stirling. His force had been considerably reduced after the recent battle by the desertion of many to hide their plunder; and the frequent quarrels that prevailed among the Highland chiefs compelled him to listen to his advisers, when they counselled a retreat to the Highlands.

The battle of Culloden. April 16th.

These unhappy events rendered the young Prince's expedition desperate: but it was completely defeated by the battle of Culloden, where the English engaged the Highland army for the last time. Prince Charles desired to surprise the Duke of Cumberland by a rapid night march but his project failed owing to the rearguard lingering too far behind the van, and he was obliged to await the approach of the English with diminished numbers and in a bad position. The right and centre of the Highlanders commanded by Lord George Murray made a desperate attack upon the English left, and, when partially successful, were driven back by the steady fire of the second line: but the clan upon the left, imagining that it had not been treated with proper respect in being denied the post of honour on the right, refused to advance, although their chieftain fell before their eyes in a vain attempt to lead them against the foe.

The final defeat and escape of the Prince.

The victory of Culloden was final. Many of the Jacobite leaders escaped to France; others were executed; and the Duke of Cumberland behaved with ruthless severity towards the conquer-

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ed Highlanders. He remained in the centre of the Highlands for some time, desolated the country, and spared the lives of none that fell into his hands. Meanwhile Prince Charles was a wanderer in his native land. He had no resting place; a price was set on his head; he was an adventurer without a hope of success: but he had won the hearts of his followers, and he found many faithful friends in the hour of distress. For five months he wandered about the islands and mountains of Scotland, but no one of the brave, chivalrous men who knew of his retreat thought for a moment of betraying him. He was often in extreme danger of falling into the hands of his enemies, but he was saved either by his own daring or by the devoted heroism of his friends. The best known instance of attachment to his cause was exhibited by Miss Flora Macdonald, a highminded, gentle lady, who, at the risk of her own life, preserved that of her Prince. She conducted him dressed in the disguise of a woman to a place of safety, through the midst of his enemies. Charles succeeded at last in reaching a French ship, which had anchored off the coast of Scotland, and escaped in her to the shores of France. With this voyage ended the brave but ill conducted enterprise of Prince Charles Edward. It was marked by the greatest gallantry on his part, and it might have proved successful, if he had been entirely guided by his

own daring spirit, and not by the counsels of the Highland chiefs. Be that, however, as it may, we admire the courageous young Prince and honour him for his courage, if not for his other qualities; but we believe that it was for the advantage of England that his enterprise failed. England was happier under the mild rule of the Georges, than she could have been under the Stuarts.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.

Soon after the rebellion in Scotland, peace was concluded with France by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle: but it proved to be more a truce than a permanent peace between the principal powers of Europe. In a few years war broke out again.

The Seven Years' War.

In 1756 the conflict called the "Seven Years' War" began, England being again opposed to her ancient enemy, France, and having Frederic the Great, King of Prussia, as her ally. The French attacked the dominions of the English king in Hanover, and the two nations were also engaged in conflict in America and India. One of the first events of the war was disastrous to England. The island of Minorca was lost, owing to the want of daring on the part of Admiral Byng, who failed to engage the French fleet. For this offence he was, perhaps unjustly, tried and executed. His error was, we believe, only an error in judgment. The English were, however, generally successful at sea; in India

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the power of the French was completely broken by Clive; and in North America victory was also upon the side of the English.

The conquest of Canada.

Mr. Pitt, afterwards Lord Chatham, became prime minister in 1757, and his first object was to effect the conquest of Canada, whereby the English possessions in America would be strengthened. The person whom he selected for the command of the English army in that quarter was General Wolfe, a young and meritorious officer, who entirely fulfilled his expectations. Quebec, the capital of Canada, a strongly fortified city, was defended on one side by almost inaccessible heights, and on the other by the French army under the Marquis de Montcalm, a skilful general, who considered himself completely secure from assault. Failing in his efforts to take the town upon the side of the defences, Wolfe formed the daring scheme of scaling the cliffs behind the city. Daring is generally successful. Wolfe attained the plain above in perfect safety, drew his forces up in battle array, and thoroughly defeated the French. Just as the victory was gained, he was himself slain: but, as he expressed himself, he died happy, since the French were defeated.

The capture of Quebec. Sept. 14th 1759.

The battle of Minden. Aug. 1st 1759.

In the preceding month the English and Prussians under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick gained the victory of Minden over the French army.

Sir Edward Hawke.

Sir Edward Hawke, one of the most dashing of

England's naval officers, maintained his country's honour at sea. On one occasion he engaged the enemy, and gained a decided victory during a severe storm. Neither the tempestuous sea, nor superior numbers, nor any other impediment could quell the energy of English soldiers and English sailors.

The death of George the Second.

While his subjects were thus victorious by land and sea, in Europe, in America, and India, George the Second died. He was personally brave, and a mild and equitable ruler: but he had the interests of Hanover at heart more than those of England, and, although he was respected, he was not loved, by the English people.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

From A. D. 1760 to A. D. 1783.

The accession of George the Third—The character of the king and court—War with France and Spain—Peace of Paris—The Empire of Great Britain—English colonies in America—Discontent in America—The American Stamp Act—Taxation of the Americans—The tea-ships at Boston—The beginning of strife—The battle of Bunker's Hill—Declaration of Independence—George Washington—The surrender of General Burgoyne—The French assist the Americans—War with France, Spain, Holland and America—The Gordon riots—Progress of the American war—Surrender of Lord Cornwallis—The victories of Rodney—The siege of Gibraltar—Success in India—Peace of Versailles.

George the Third, the grandson of the late king, was the next sovereign of England. The beginning of this young prince's reign was full of promise, and his long and eventful life fully corresponded to the expectations of the people at his accession. Unlike his two immediate prede-

cessors, he had been born in England, and he was delighted at this circumstance, which was of itself sufficient to endear him to the people. In the year after he came to the throne he married the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburgh Strelitz in Germany, with whom he enjoyed many years of happiness. Both king and queen were persons of perfect uprightness and integrity of character, and their court was distinguished as the best and purest in Europe.

War with France and Spain.

The war with France, which had hitherto been so successful, was continued with vigour. The French at this time succeeded in inducing the Spaniards to enter into alliance with them, although that nation did not at once declare war against England. Mr. Pitt, to whose courage and wisdom England had chiefly owed her recent advantages, desired to proclaim war against that power immediately; but, not being able to carry his measures, he was obliged to resign his office as minister. His successor was, however, compelled to carry out his design, and England engaged in war with Spain as well as with France: but she was as victorious over the new enemy, as she had been over the old. The Spanish commerce was injured; several of her foreign possessions were captured; and Havannah, the principal Spanish town in the West Indies, and Manilla, the capital of the Philippine Islands in the Indian Archipelago, fell into the power of the

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English. Both France and Spain soon wearied of a war which proved eminently disastrous to them, and a treaty of peace was concluded between them and England at Paris.

The Empire of Great Britain.

The Empire of Great Britain at this time was of enormous extent. During the war she had acquired several new territories. Canada had been added to her dominions; many other important conquests, which had been made from France and Spain, had been retained; and the foundations of her rule in India had been securely laid. The history of England is henceforward the history of one of the largest Empires which has ever been given to one nation.

The English colonies in America.

At the peace of Paris the most extensive of the English colonies were in America. In the sixteenth century Englishmen had left the country of their fathers to inhabit a foreign country in the west, and to bring new territories under the power of the land they loved. Others followed their example from desire of gain or hope of glory; and, in the following century, when England had fallen on evil days and fellow-countrymen were about to engage in war, many set sail for the shores of America where they hoped to live in peace. Several had been persecuted in England for their mode of worship, and had departed in the hope of finding a place, amidst the broad forests and extensive plains of America,

where they could serve their Creator unmolested. The colonies increased in strength and size. New towns, often named after the cities of England, arose in places where there was formerly a wilderness, and the ancient inhabitants of the land retreated before the European settler.

Discontent in America.

Thus separated from their native country, the colonists of America began to lose their affection for it. The new, and not the old, land became the object of their love. At the conclusion of the war, a general feeling of discontent was entertained by the Americans against their mother country on account of a resolution which the English ministers had come to of imposing upon them a tax for the expenses of the war. This demand was just. It was fair that those who had been protected by fleets and armies, as others had been, should share in the expense of remunerating those who had contributed to their defence. When an Empire is at war, the whole Empire should share the common loss or rejoice in the common glory. The Americans did not, however, object to being taxed, but they denied that the parliament of England had a right to tax them without their own consent. They were not represented in that assembly, and it was contrary to the laws and constitution of the kingdom that any persons should be compelled to pay an impost by the parliament in which they had them-

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selves no voice. The spirit, though not the letter, of the law was thereby broken.

The American Stamp Act.

Notwithstanding the murmurs of the colonists, Mr. Grenville, who was then prime minister, passed a law by which it was enacted that all official documents in America were to be written on stamped paper upon which a trifling duty was to be levied. The news of the Stamp Act greatly excited the Americans. They behaved as if a public calamity had befallen them; at Boston the bells were tolled mournfully, as they would have been if an eminent man had died; remonstrances to the king were written; and members from each of the thirteen colonies met in a general congress at New York for the purpose of offering a united opposition to the obnoxious Act.

Taxation of the Americans.

After several changes in the ministry, Lord North became prime minister in 1770, when the duties which had been imposed upon the Americans were repealed, with the exception of a small tax on tea, which was retained, in order that the authority of the mother country over the colonists might be supported. The Stamp Act had been abandoned after a fierce debate in the Houses of Parliament, in which Mr. Pitt exerted all the strength of his eloquence and the winning magic of his voice, for he foresaw that resistance to the wishes of the Americans would lead to an unhappy contest with them, and not unlikely to a war

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with France. The more conciliating policy which he advocated would have averted both. The enforced duty on tea, although it was of the most trifling nature, irritated the colonists to such an extent that they refused to receive that article, and, upon a number of ships laden with it arriving in the port of Boston, a party of the towns-people boarded them in disguise and threw every chest of tea into the water. To punish the people for this outrage, the commercial privileges which Boston had hitherto enjoyed were withdrawn, and additional troops were despatched to preserve peace and order.

The tea-ships at Boston.

But the indignation of the colonists was thoroughly roused. The contests between them and the mother country had been carried on for several years with increasing rancour, and nothing but large concessions to which neither party would consent could avert a civil war. The first blood in the strife was shed at Lexington, where a detachment of English troops seized some military stores, and were pursued on their return by the colonists, who fired at the soldiers, and annoyed them exceedingly, without assembling in a compact body which could be easily attacked and dispersed. A severe battle was fought at Bunker's Hill near Boston, in which, after several failures, the English soldiers succeeded in dislodging the Americans from the position which they had taken up near that city. But the Americans were

The beginning of strife.

The battle Bunker's Hill. June 17th 1775.

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numerically superior to the English troops, although inferior in discipline, and they had a decided advantage over their enemy in the number of admirable marksmen who filled their ranks.

Declaration of Independence.

On the 4th of July in the following year the congress of the United States came to a decision which changed the character of the war. On that day they published a declaration of independence. Before this event, the bitter feeling between the Americans and their mother country might have been allayed; but that was now rendered impossible. It henceforward became an irreconcilable war of independence. The English were generally successful at first, owing to the better training of their army, but the American general who had lately been made the commander-in-chief of their forces, was a man of great courage and ability. George Washington, the new commander, was self-denying in adversity and self-reliant in danger. He undertook the cause of the Americans from principle, and maintained it with firmness and prudence. He was equally distinguished for his military genius and for the integrity of his personal character.

George Washington.

Surrender of General Burgoyne.

The inhabitants of Canada generally remained faithful to the British cause, and from that direction an expedition was undertaken by General Burgoyne into the disaffected districts. The

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American army, hastily collected to oppose his march, was full of brave, determined men. They encountered the English with spirit, and after two fierce engagements upon some hills called Behmus's Heights, the English commander was obliged by superior numbers to retreat. Upon reaching a place called Saratoga, he found that he was surrounded by the enemy. He had not for some time received provisions; his force had been considerably reduced by disease and death; he was surrounded by an enemy five times more numerous than his own troops; further retreat seemed impossible, and resistance appeared to be a wanton waste of life; and he felt himself compelled to agree to the enemy's proposal of surrender. The American general's name was Gates, but the principal merit of this triumph was due to Mr. Arnold, who was the foremost in every attack, but who afterwards became a traitor to the cause which he had espoused.

The French assist the Americans.

This event was the first great blow to the power of the English in America. Upon hearing the news, France promised her assistance to the Americans. A commercial treaty, and subsequently a defensive alliance, was entered into between the ancient enemy of England and her new foes. Spain took the side of France, and Holland also declared war against England, who was thus at the same time engaged in hostilities

War with France, Spain, Holland, and America.

CHAP. XXII. A. D. 1778. against three of the European powers as well as against her rebellious subjects. But her ancient spirit had not deserted her, and, although the contest ended in the independence of the United States, she was victorious over France and Spain. When it was proposed that the war should be abandoned on account of the new difficulties which had arisen, the venerable Lord Chatham,* rose in the House of Lords to lift his voice against the indignity. "Let us," he said, "at least make one effort, and if we must fall, let us fall like men." On attempting to reply to an opponent, he fell down in a fit, and died a few weeks after. Thus, with his latest breath maintaining his country's honour, departed a statesman who had served his country well.

The Gordon riots.

In 1780 London was the scene of disgraceful riots. Some of the penal enactments against the Roman Catholics had been lately repealed, and these concessions, though in themselves just and proper, gave great offence to many persons in the kingdom. Meetings were held for the purpose of condemning the new measures. The populace took up the cry against the ministry; those who conscientiously opposed the ministers were joined by the lowest of the rabble, who were intent on plunder and rapine only; and, being excited by

* Mr. Pitt had a few years previously been created the Earl of Chatham.

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Lord George Gordon, a foolish young nobleman, who was charitably accounted mad, they committed numerous acts of violence. The members of parliament were insulted, several Roman Catholic chapels were burned, the prisons were opened, and many private dwelling houses were plundered. London was in a state of complete anarchy, for the police were not then in the admirable state for effective service that they are now, and the tumults were not quelled, until the soldiery had fired upon the mob and effectually dispersed the rioters.

Progress of the American war.

Meanwhile the war with America proceeded unfavourably. For some time after the French had openly declared their alliance with the Americans, the events of the campaign issued in favour of the English: Sir Henry Clinton, the commander-in-chief, had been successful; he had besieged Charlestown and caused the Americans to capitulate; Lord Cornwallis had defeated General Gates; and the French had been obliged to retreat. But though the American cause seemed desperate, Washington remained undaunted. He saw that a sudden and decisive blow was at that time absolutely necessary to rouse the spirit of his countrymen, that the Americans were relying on foreign help, and not depending, as formerly, on their own exertions. He determined, therefore, to attempt a rapid march against Lord Cornwallis in

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Surrender of Lord Cornwallis, Octr. 19th.

the south, in the hopes of subduing his small force before it could be supported by Sir Henry Clinton. Advancing speedily to the south with his French allies, he laid siege to York-town where Lord Cornwallis was encamped. The place was weak, the English commander had previously reported that it could not be put in a proper state of defence, and, after a fortnight's siege, Lord Cornwallis was compelled to surrender. His force, even if all in it had been effective, would have been less than half of the enemy's; but an epidemic disease had laid many low, and the expected succour which Sir Henry Clinton had promised to send by sea had not arrived.

The victories of Rodney.

The American war of independence virtually ended with the surrender of Lord Cornwallis: but peace was not concluded until two years afterwards, when the war with France and Spain was likewise terminated. Meanwhile the English sailors had maintained their superiority at sea. Their commanders were generally successful: but the victories of Sir George Rodney were the most brilliant and the most decisive. On the 16th of January 1780, he gained a complete triumph over the Spanish admiral Don Juan de Longara whom he took prisoner. On the 12th of April 1782, he totally defeated the French fleet in the West Indies under the Count de Grasse. The French ships were drawn up in line: and the

English, with the ship which bore the admiral leading the way, sailed straight towards them, divided their line in sunder, and, after a severe action of eleven hours, made them surrender. The French admiral was the last to give in. He fought his ship most gallantly, but he was obliged at last to strike his flag to the unconquerable Rodney. By this victory a French invasion of Jamaica was averted.

The siege of Gibraltar. From June 1779 to February 1783.

But, while the English were thus triumphant at sea, they exhibited equal endurance and courage on land. The strong rock-fortress of Gibraltar was held, throughout the war with Spain, by an English garrison under General Elliot. The Spaniards laid siege to it at the commencement of the war, and, except at intervals when the garrison were relieved by the English fleet, continued it until the conclusion of peace. At one time the siege was turned into a close blockade, at another a spirited attack was kept up: but during the blockade the English soldiers, though suffering severely from hunger, remained firm and stedfast at their posts; and every attack was repulsed with loss to the besiegers. The French assisted the Spaniards, but the efforts of both were unavailing. In September, 1782, a last and desperate assault was made. A skilful French engineer had constructed several floating batteries of great size and strength, which were brought within a few hundred yards of the fortifications.

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These batteries fired incessantly for several hours, the English returning the fire with red-hot balls, and the conflict continued far into the night. At length several of the Spanish vessels caught fire, and floated from their moorings, and the French and Spanish ships were obliged to withdraw from the contest. The terrific sight of the burning vessels roused the compassion of the brave English garrison. They had risked their lives to maintain their country's honour and to keep the trust that had been committed to their charge; they now risked their lives to save their fallen enemies. Captain Curtis and the marines were foremost in this noble enterprise, and they succeeded in saving many of their late antagonists from a death more horrible than that which is usually met in war. Theirs was the conduct of brave and honourable men who fight to the last when compelled by duty, but who always spare the fallen and succour the wounded.

Successes in India.

During the war in Europe, the English possessions in India were preserved by the skill and courage of Warren Hastings, the Governor of Bengal. Hyder Ali, the most able enemy with whom the English had ever to contend in this country, invaded the Carnatic and was assisted in his operations by the French. He was defeated by the spirit and gallantry of the English commanders: and, at the time when America was lost, the

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power of England was more firmly established over India than it had ever been before, to the great and lasting benefit of the people.

The peace Versailles. September 3rd.

Treaties of peace between the contending powers were signed at Versailles on the 3rd of September 1783. Lord North had resigned his position as minister upon the unsuccessful issue of the American war; and the Earl of Shelburne, who was prime minister at the time, conducted the negotiations. By the peace of Versailles the independence of America was acknowledged by England, as well as by the other European powers; the mother-country was separated from her American colonies; and a new nation took its place among the older nations of the world.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ERA OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

From A. D. 1783 to A. D. 1804.

Coalition of Lord North and Mr. Fox—Administration of Mr. Pitt—His East India Bill—Illness and recovery of the king—The French Revolution—The Reign of Terror—League against France—England joins the alliance—Expedition to Holland—Lord Howe's victory—Napoleon Buonaparte—Mutinies in the navy—Battles of Cape St. Vincent and Camperdown—Insurrection in Ireland—Buonaparte's expetion to Egypt—Nelson—The battle of the Nile—Buonaparte overthrows the Directory—Becomes First Consul—The northern confederacy—The battle of Copenhagen—The confederacy broken up—The battle of Alexandria—Death of Sir Ralph Abercrombie—The French are expelled from Egypt—English successes in India—The threatened invasion of England—Resolution of the people—The peace of Amiens—The renewal of war—Buonaparte becomes Emperor of the French.

After the conclusion of the American war, Mr. Fox and Lord North entered into a coalition, and, under the nominal leadership of the Duke

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of Portland, assumed the principal position in the ministry. The king, who had formerly supported Lord North, strenuously opposed this coalition, and it was generally condemned throughout the country, because both those ministers, having been previously bitter political opponents, sacrificed uprightness and consistency by the new arrangements. This ministry, however, was not of long duration. Mr. Fox failed in attempting to carry a measure for the better government of India, by which, if it had succeeded, India would have been placed under the immediate power of the Crown; and William Pitt, the second son of the late Lord Chatham, became prime minister at the early age of twenty-five, which high position he retained during the remainder of his life with the exception of a short interval. He inherited his father's eloquence and his father's patriotism, and he served his country as faithfully and as well. One of his first measures was to introduce a bill by which the English possessions in this country were placed under the power both of the East India Company and the Crown.

Administration of Mr. Pitt.

In the year 1788 the king fell into a very precarious state of health. He lost the use of his mental faculties, and remained for some time in a state of unhappy imbecility. It became necessary to appoint a regent to carry on the affairs of government; but, while parliament was deliberating

Illness and recovery of the king.

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about the powers which might properly be entrusted to a regent, the king recovered his health, to the unfeigned joy of his people. On the 23rd of the following April, he went in solemn state to St. Paul's cathedral, the principal church in the metropolis, and publicly returned thanks to his Preserver for his restoration to health and reason. He was accompanied by hundreds of his subjects, and, throughout the kingdom, the rejoicings and thanks were as fervent as his own.

The French Revolution.

At this period England for several years enjoyed the blessing of peace: but a revolution occurred in France, in the year of king George's recovery, which not only occasioned unexampled misery to that country, but also caused great anxiety and danger to the surrounding nations. France had for a long time been badly governed. The upper and lower classes of society were thoroughly estranged from each other, and much discontent and ill-feeling were entertained by the latter. The example of the Americans in separating from their country had an evil effect upon the minds of the discontented, and the increase of infidelity in France led them to seek for redress by unlawful means. In 1789 Paris was the scene of a revolt which, instead of lasting for a short time, as is usually the case with popular tumults, increased in fury and atrocity as it increased in length. The king was put to death after several

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months' imprisonment; his gentle, highminded queen suffered the same fate soon afterwards; most of the nobility who remained in the country lost their lives; no one was safe, unless he followed the insane desires of the mob. This sad time has received the appropriate name of the Reign of Terror. Robespierre, Danton, and Marat are the names of the infamous men who, when every atrocity abounded, exceeded their fellows in abominations and crime.

The Reign of Terror.

Not content with the misery which they had caused in their own country, the republican chiefs of France, who had instituted a kind of parliament which they called the National Convention, declared their desire of assisting all that might attempt to rise in arms against lawful authority. A league was consequently entered into against France. Austria, Prussia, and Holland entered into alliance, and England joined the league, after the death of Louis the Sixteenth, the French sovereign. The French revolutionary army had entered Holland when war was declared, and a force was sent from England under the Duke of York, the king's second son, to assist the inhabitants of that country: but the expedition failed, and was obliged, after several disasters, to return to England. A short time afterwards Holland was conquered and became a dependency of France.

League against France.

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Lord Howe's victory. June 1st.

But, although the English were not at first successful by land, they were every where triumphant at sea. Lord Howe thoroughly defeated the French fleet in a severe engagement that took place in the English Channel. The government of the French Republic had by this time become more settled. An Executive Directory had the management of affairs, and as they appeared to be more moderate in their opinions than their predecessors had been, the Government of England attempted to enter into a negotiation with them: but their endeavours were frustrated and the war was continued. The French armies had to contend against several nations and they were not always successful: but in 1796, Napoleon Buonaparte, a Corsican officer in the French service, who had rapidly risen to a high station by his ability in war, assumed the command in Italy, and his victories were so rapid and so decisive, that they speedily rendered the French army every where triumphant.

Napoleon Buonaparte.

Mutiny in the English Navy.

As the war proceeded, several of her former allies deserted England, and the state of that country was at one time very gloomy. But the spirit of the people was as noble as it had ever been; internal disquietude was effectually quelled, and foreign enemies were faced with courage and determination. A mutiny arose among the sailors of the Channel fleet, and, soon after it had been allayed by the conciliat-

ing measures that were adopted towards the seamen; a second mutiny, more formidable than the last, took place at the Nore, near the mouth of the Thames. This was as effectually quelled by severity, as the other had been by kindness. In the same year two victories were gained over the enemies of England,—the latter by the very men who had thus rebelled. Spain had joined France, and in February a Spanish fleet was attempting to unite with a French armament, when it was met off Cape St. Vincent by Sir John Jervis, who immediately engaged and conquered it. For this service he was created Lord St. Vincent, taking his title from the Cape near which the victory was won. Soon afterwards Admiral Duncan defeated a Dutch fleet off Camperdown and he was likewise rewarded by a peerage.

Insurrection in Ireland.

Ireland was at this time in an unsettled state. Among a certain party great discontent was felt towards the English Government, which had lately been increased by agents from France; and an unhappy rebellion broke out, which was, however, speedily suppressed, and Lord Cornwallis, who had a short time previously been the Governor General of India, being appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, peace and confidence were soon restored. In the following year the parliaments of England and Ireland were united in the same manner as those of England

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and Scotland had been a century before. This measure has proved beneficial to both countries.

Buonaparte's expedition to Egypt.

The warfare with France was continued with vigour. Napoleon Buonaparte, the French General, designing to aim a blow at the English possessions in India, embarked on board a French fleet with an army of thirty thousand men for Egypt; and, speedily subduing that country, he marched into Syria, where, however, he was baffled by the daring of Sir Sydney Smith, an English admiral, who with his seamen animated the Turks at Acre to make a desperate defence of their town. Meanwhile Sir Horatio Nelson, after anxiously watching for the French fleet for a considerable time, learnt that it was at anchor in Aboukir Bay at the mouth of the Nile. He immediately proceeded thither, determined at all hazards to bring them to battle. The attack was daring, but perfectly successful. The French were anchored in shallow water: but the English, steering boldly between them and the coast, began the action without a moment's hesitation. Nelson, who commanded the English fleet, was the best, the bravest, and the most skilful of England's admirals, and he was never known to hesitate when an enemy was in sight. His daring led him to despise difficulties, and his wisdom enabled him to overcome them. His great qualities and important victories endeared him to the hearts of his sailors, and gained for him the respect and confidence of the nation.

Nelson.

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The battle of Nile. August 1st.

The engagement took place at night, and, ere the morning broke, the greater number of the French ships had surrendered. About midnight a noise was heard, louder than the noise of cannon and the shouts of fighting men, and, for a season, the roar of battle ceased, and the seamen remained silent at the unusual sound. The largest ship in the French fleet had exploded. Nelson was wounded: but, regardless of his wound, he hastened to the deck of his vessel, and exerted himself to save his fallen enemies. After the engagement, thanksgivings were offered up in every British ship for this signal victory, by which the first great blow to the ambitious career of Buonaparte had been struck.

Buonaparte overthrows the Directory.

Universal conquest was Napoleon Buonaparte's desire; and, as the surest method to obtain this, he determined to return to his own country, to overthrow the existing government which was then in an unsettled state, and to assume the chief power himself. Leaving the army in Egypt under the charge of his second in command, he embarked on board a French frigate, and, contriving to elude the English fleet in the Mediterranean, landed in France, and immediately proceeded to Paris. On his arrival there, he dissolved the government, abolished the Directory, and entrusted the management of affairs to three persons called consuls, of whom he was to be the

He becomes First Consul.

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chief. Under the title of First Consul, he governed France as absolutely as Cromwell had governed England. The French had henceforward a military government, and, being a military nation, fond of glory and conquest, they delighted in the martial projects of their leader.

The northern confederacy.

The English had in the late events of the war gained such an undoubted superiority at sea over every other nation, that great jealousy was entertained towards her even by those powers who had not been opposed to her before. Russia, Sweden, and Denmark entered into a confederacy against England to resist the right which she claimed of searching unarmed vessels belonging to neutral nations, lest they should contain ammunition for her enemies. This union was speedily broken. An English fleet under Sir Hyde Parker and Nelson, who had been made a peer for the victory of the Nile, immediately sailed to Copenhagen, where Nelson destroyed the whole of the Danish fleet, and effectually humbled the power of Denmark. The death of the Russian Emperor put an end to the hostile designs of Russia and Sweden; and his successor renewed the friendly relations that had formerly been entertained between his country and England.

The battle of Copenhagen. April 2nd 1801.

The battle of Alexandria. March 21st.

Meanwhile the French army in Egypt had been defeated. An English force had been sent to

drive them out of that country, and the French were repulsed in an engagement which took place near Alexandria, and in which the English general, the brave Sir Ralph Abercrombie, was slain. His successor continued the campaign successfully. The French commanders were compelled to capitulate, the French army was conveyed to France in English vessels, and Egypt was again free from a foreign enemy. In this campaign several sepoy regiments under Sir David Baird arrived in Egypt to share in the defence of that country.

The French are expelled from Egypt.

The English arms had been equally triumphant in India. The successes of Napoleon and his hostility to the English had incited Tippoo Sultan, the son of Hyder Ali, to declare war again; but Seringapatam, the chief city in his dominions, had been captured, and he had himself been slain during the assault. The Carnatic and other equally misgoverned provinces had been ceded to the English, and the administration of affairs was in the hands of the Marquis Wellesley, a viceroy who, by the boldness of his designs and the ability of his rule, made the power of the English in India to be thoroughly respected.

English successes in India.

In the same year Napoleon Buonaparte made preparations for an invasion of England. An army was assembled at Boulogne, opposite the coast of England, and a flotilla was in readiness

The threatened invasion of England.

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to convey it across the Channel. England was the only country which had successfully resisted him, and he eagerly desired to bring it also under his dominion. But England was prepared for resistance to the last: volunteer regiments were formed in every part of the kingdom; the navy in the Channel were placed on the alert; the strength, unanimity, and resolution of the English people were never shewn to greater advantage. The people thoroughly hated Buonaparte, and they determined that, if he invaded their country, they would resist him to the death. Nelson made a midnight attack on the flotilla at Boulogne, and, although he was unsuccessful, the devoted courage which he and his seamen exhibited, plainly shewed to Buonaparte the impracticability of his design. The threatened invasion was abandoned, and in the following year peace between France and England was concluded at Amiens. Mr. Pitt, the great war-minister, had resigned his position as premier at the beginning of 1801, and Mr. Addington, his successor, conducted the negotiations of peace. The rejoicings at the conclusion of hostilities were exceedingly great both in London and at Paris, for both France and England were tired of the war.

The peace of Amiens. March 27th 1802.

The renewal of war.

But the peace was not of long duration: it resembled a truce more than a peace; and during the time it lasted Buonaparte was meditating

the renewal of war. Hostilities again broke out in 1803, and Mr. Pitt soon after returned to power. At the commencement of the war Buonaparte imprisoned all the English travellers in France,—an act of perfidy which justly excited against him the indignation of all their fellow countrymen.

Buonaparte becomes Emperor of the French.

In 1804, Napoleon Buonaparte assumed the title of Emperor of the French. He was crowned with great pomp and splendour at Paris, to which place the Pope paid a visit in order that he might assist in the ceremonial. Buonaparte had now obtained the height of his ambition with regard to his own country: but he had not yet succeeded in all his designs of conquest, nor had he yet attained the dangerous elevation over the other sovereigns of continental Europe, which he eagerly coveted, and which, after he had once obtained it, was speedily succeeded by his downfall.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DOWNFALL OF NAPOLEON.

FROM A. D. 1804 TO A. D. 1815.

Napoleon's navy—The battle of Trafalgar—Napoleon reaches the height of his power—The death of Mr. Pitt—Operations against Denmark—The Spaniards rise against Napoleon—Character of Sir Arthur Wellesley—An English army lands in Portugal—The battle of Roliça,—The battle of Vimiero—The Convention of Cintra—The expedition of Sir John Moore—The battle of Corunna—First campaign in the Peninsula—The battle of Talavera—The French re-enter Portugal—The lines of Torres Vedras—Capture of Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo—The battle of Salamanca—The retreat from Burgos—The French are driven from the Peninsula—The battle of Vittoria—The English forces enter France—The king loses his reason—The appointment of a Regent—War with the United States—Grand alliance against the Emperor—The return of Napoleon—The battle of Waterloo—The exile of Napoleon.

ONE of Napoleon's first objects in the new contest in which he was engaged with England

was to form a navy strong enough to contend with the fleets of that power: although he was triumphant on land, he was desirous of obtaining a superiority also at sea. All his efforts, however, were unavailing. The French fleet was improved, but one engagement with Nelson was sufficient to destroy it. The greater number of the French fleet had joined the fleet of Spain, which country was then under the power of Napoleon, and the combined navy were met near Cape Trafalgar by the English. As the English vessels advanced towards the enemy's line, the last signal which Nelson made to those under his command contained words which were the principle of Nelson's own life, and form the desire of every Englishman. "England expects every man to do his duty": and every man in that action did his duty faithfully and well. The greater number of the French and Spanish fleet were taken, but, a storm arising soon after the battle, only four of them were brought in triumph to England. By this victory every chance of invasion from France was completely frustrated, and the English navy remained beyond all doubt triumphant at sea: but when the news was received in England every heart was sad, every eye was filled with tears,—their own brave admiral was slain. He had gained a victory; but it was at the cost of his life. A marksman in a French ship had singled him out as he was walking on the deck and he was carried below to die, but not

The battle of Trafalgar. October 21st.

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before he had heard that all the enemy's vessels had surrendered.

Napoleon reaches the height of his power.

In the same year the war was renewed on the continent. The Austrians and Russians declared war against Napoleon, who defeated them at Austerlitz, and the Emperor of Germany was obliged to submit to a degrading peace at the instigation of his conqueror. During the two following years Napoleon attained the height of his power over Europe: Austria, Prussia, and the smaller states of Germany were subservient to his will; the kingdom of Naples was given to his brother-in law, Murat; Holland was governed by his brother Louis Bounaparte; Portugal was in possession of his army; and he had appointed his brother Joseph to the throne of Spain. But his career of conquest was arrested by England, the only nation who had hitherto steadfastly opposed him.

The death of Mr. Pitt.

In 1806, Mr. Pitt, who had again become prime minister soon after the renewal of war, died and was succeeded by his rival, Mr. Fox; but that statesman also died in the same year. In the following year several expeditions were undertaken in different parts of the world, but none of them were attended with success, except an enterprise by which Denmark was rendered powerless to assist Napoleon or to injure England. The English ministry, believed that that country was

Operations against Denmark.

A. D. 1807.

about to enter into a compulsory alliance with Napoleon, and, although war had not been declared between the two nations, they despatched a sufficient force to capture Copenhagen and to secure the Danish fleet.

The Spaniards rise against Napoleon.

The determination of Napoleon to seize the Spanish crown, and to maintain his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne, thoroughly exasperated the people of Spain, and, with unusual determination and energy, they rose to resist his unwarrantable demands. The Spaniards were at first successful. A French army was obliged to capitulate; the new-king fled from Madrid; and, if they had been able to act longer with unanimity and vigour, their object would have been completely attained, without assistance: but they were deficient in military stores, in discipline, and in leaders, and it was decided that persons should be deputed to ask for aid from England. The English ministry immediately acceded to their request: an army of 10,000 men was despatched to Portugal under Sir Arthur Wellesley; and a war was commenced which materially conduced to the downfall of Napoleon's power, and to the honour of the English name.

Character of Sir Arthur Wellesley.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, afterwards the Duke of Wellington, was England's greatest general. He was a perfect master in the art of military strategy; and he successively defeated

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Napoleon's ablest marshals and finally Napoleon himself. He brought his men into a perfect state of subordination, and the army which he commanded in the Peninsula, perfected by his discipline and animated by his presence, would, as he was heard to say, do any thing and go any where. The first desire of his heart was to fulfil his duty. Duty inspired him at all times and in all places. He was ready to assume the command of armies or to resign that position; he was ready to serve in India, in Denmark, or the Peninsula; he was prepared to undergo annoyance and fatigue; to bear blame unjustly attached to him by his own countrymen or to encounter the formidable opposition of proud and intractable allies; to spend his life or to meet his death, in the cause of duty. His unconquerable will carried him through all difficulties and dangers, and he was rewarded by the feeling that he had given security to Europe, and added fresh lustre to the glory of his country. He had shown his ability for command in India, where by the bold, dashing battle of Assaye he shewed that he possessed the courage, as well as the skill, of a perfect general. He had lately distinguished himself in Denmark, and he was now appointed to command the English force in Portugal and Spain.

An English army lands n Portugal.

He landed in Mondego Bay near Lisbon, where Junot, one of Napoleon's marshals, was stationed

A.D. 1808.

The battle of Roliça. August 17th.

in command of a French army. As Sir Arthur Wellesley was advancing towards that city, he was opposed by a portion of the French troops at a village named Roliça. The French were thoroughly defeated: they retired from one position which they held to another, and the English soldiers drove them from all in succession, shewing that they were, as ever, fully equal to cope with their ancient foes. A short time afterwards he defeated Junot at Vimeiro: but he was deterred from obtaining the fruits of victory by Sir Harry Burrard, who had superseded him in the command, and who desired to wait for reinforcements before undertaking further operations.

The battle of Vimiero. August. 20th.

The Convention of Cintra.

Sir Harry Burrard had scarcely assumed command of the victorious army when he was in his turn displaced by Sir Hew Dalrymple, who also determined to wait for reinforcements before attacking the defeated and discomfited forces of the enemy. Junot soon afterwards asked for terms, and a convention was concluded between the English and French commanders at Cintra, by which the French gained more than a beaten enemy ought to have demanded or received. He was obliged to quit Portugal: but, if Sir Arthur Wellesley's advice had been taken, the victories of Roliça and Vimeiro would have been followed up rapidly, and the whole French army forced to make a precipitate retreat.

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The expedition of Sir John Moore.

Soon afterwards a detachment from the English army was sent under Sir John Moore to co-operate with the Spaniards in the north west of the Peninsula. Napoleon had, however, with his usual rapidity of action and remarkable dexterity in war, re-conquered nearly the whole of Spain; and Sir John Moore was compelled to retreat before a French army commanded by Marshal Soult, one of Napoleon's most renowned subordinates. His backward march was disastrous: but the end of it was as glorious, as the beginning had been sad. When he reached Corunna, the French army was close at hand, and an engagement was necessary to enable the English troops to embark on board their ships in safety. The columns, so lately in retreat and disarray, bravely turned to face the advancing enemy and gained a signal victory.

The battle of Corunna. January 16th 1809.

Death of Sir John Moore.

The English commander was slain. Almost his dying words were, "I hope they will do me justice at home." His fellow-countrymen did do him justice, and there are few commanders whose loss they regretted more acutely than Sir John Moore.

First campaign in the Peninsula.

But the greatest struggle in which the English had been engaged with the French since the days of Marlborough was about to commence. In April 1809, Sir Arthur Wellesley again assumed command of the English troops in Portugal, and,

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in conjunction with the Portuguese army which he reorganized and strengthened, prepared to oppose the French invaders. The French under Marshal Soult had re-entered Portugal, and had taken possession of Oporto, preparatory to making a descent on Lisbon and a final assault on the small English army that remained there, while two other French commanders were to co-operate with him from the adjoining provinces of Spain. Sir Arthur's first action was to march straight against Soult, who, having destroyed the bridges over the Douro, felt himself quite secure with the broad river between him and his opponent. The English commander, however, crossed the stream in the face of the French army, completely routed it, and felt himself in a position to advance against the French troops which threatened to enter Portugal from Estremadura, the neighbouring province of Spain.

The battle of Talavera. July 27th.

Proceeding towards the capital, he met the French army commanded by Napoleon's brother, the nominal king of Spain, who was supported by two able French marshals, at Talavera. A Spanish force nominally co-operated with him; but they were worse than useless, and Sir Arthur Wellesley with 22,000 Englishmen was opposed to more than double the number of Napoleon's best troops. But he was perfectly equal to the task. At every point the French gave way, and

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Sir Arthur Wellesley remained victorious in the heart of Spain. For this triumph, he was created a peer as Viscount Wellington, under which name he has ever since been known and honoured.

The French re-enter Portugal.

After the battle of Talavera, Napoleon, seriously alarmed for the preservation of his power in Spain, sent regiment after regiment into that country under his most daring marshals. Wellington had retired before the increasing numbers into Portugal, and Massena with a large force followed him, determined, in Napoleon's own words, to sweep the English leopards into the sea. This was easier said then done. Wellington continued to retreat before the French marshal, but to shew that the retreat was not undertaken from fear and to inspirit his soldiers, he remained at a place called Busaco to give battle to the French. After defeating them, he quietly resumed his retreat, and Massena, believing that his object was nearly gained, followed impetuously, only to find himself again baffled by the skill and forethought of the English general.

The lines of Torres Vedras.

Foreseeing that retreat would be for a time necessary on account of the great numbers opposed to him, Wellington had prepared a fortified encampment of great strength into which his troops could safely retire. The French marshal now found himself opposite these formidable en-

trenchments in the midst of a hostile country, while the English troops enjoyed abundance and security within. The lines of Torres Vedras were composed of a triple line of impregnable fortifications, extending from the Tagus to the sea, and there was an ample space within the country thus enclosed to contain the whole of the British and Portuguese armies. Massena remained before these lines for a month, and then, finding his troops thinned and enfeebled by disease and starvation, he was obliged to retreat, and to quit Portugal with his army reduced to nearly half the amount with which he had entered it with the confident expectation of victory. The retiring marshal turned to give battle to his pursuer at a place named Fuentes d'Onoro, but he again experienced a defeat, leaving Wellington victorious in every way—in retreat, in defence, and in pursuit.

Capture of Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo.

Having thus relieved Portugal from the presence of the French, Wellington again determined to advance into Spain: he was, however, unable to effect this object so long as the fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz remained in possession of the French; for these strongholds were situated so close to the frontiers of Portugal, that he could not with safety advance, while they remained untaken. He directed his first efforts against Badajoz. General Beresford, who was at

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the head of the Portuguese army, conducted the commencement of the siege, owing to the temporary absence of Wellington, and defeated Marshal Soult, who had advanced from the south to attempt the relief of Badajoz, in the bloody battle of Albuera. The English only just gained the victory; but they did gain it, and the siege of Badajoz was continued. Their first attacks, however, failed, and the siege was raised: but ere long both Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz fell before the genius of Wellington and the courage of his troops.

The battle of Salamanca, July 22nd 1812.

When he had gained possession of these two important towns, Wellington was again at liberty to advance into the interior of Spain. Marmont, the marshal who commanded the French in the centre of that country, was a master of military strategy; but Wellington was his superior in that, as well as in every other, respect. Marmont retired for a time as Wellington advanced: but at length the two armies met face to face. After manœuvring for several days without coming to an action, as each general was anxious to take advantage of the slightest oversight on his adversary's part, Marmont permitted his army to separate, and gave Wellington an opportunity of attacking him with decided advantage. The French forces were for a time entirely paralysed by this decisive victory, and the victorious army marched straight to Madrid, where the

populace hailed their deliverers with triumph and rejoicing.

The retreat from Burgos.

But the advantage thus gained was transitory. Though the French had been routed in the centre of the Peninsula, they still had a large force in the east; their scattered troops were again collecting; and Burgos, the only important stronghold that was left to them, was being strengthened as a rallying point in time of need. It was necessary to reduce that fort before any other operation could be successfully attempted: but the endeavour failed, and the English commander retired from that place, and, recalling his forces from Madrid, again remained upon the defensive near the frontier of Portugal.

The French are driven from the Peninsula.

In the year 1813 the patience and perseverance of Wellington met with their reward. The Peninsula was freed from foreign enemies, and the French army was pursued across the Pyrenees into their own territory, and there again defeated. Hitherto Wellington had advanced into the interior of Spain either by the road of Salamanca or Talavera: but, as the French general was anticipating his approach by one of those routes, he this time advanced by the valley to the north of the Douro. Joseph Bounaparte, who commanded the French army in person, retired before the advancing English; blew up the fort of Burgos in his flight; and, remaining to meet his

The battle of of Vittoria. June 21st 1813.

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adversary at Vittoria, received another decisive defeat in which he abandoned to the victors his baggage, ammunition, and treasure.

The English forces enter France.

Wellington speedily followed up this important success; laid siege to the frontier fortresses of St. Sebastian and Pampeluna; and prepared to resist any efforts that might be made by the French to retrieve their disaster and to re-enter Spain. St. Sebastian was carried by assault; the French were defeated in several sanguinary engagements which took place in the passes of the Pyrenees; and the British army finally forced an entrance into France. Soult whom Napoleon had sent to oppose his former adversary, was again defeated at Orthes and Toulouse. But the day after the well-contested battle of Toulouse, news was received that Napoleon himself had yielded to the allied forces, and the long warfare which had been so successfully maintained by Wellington was brought to an end.

The king loses his reason.

We have omitted all mention of the other occurrences of the time, that we might be enabled to give a connected account of the Peninsular war: but we will now relate the most important. In 1810 king George the Third relapsed into a state of imbecility, soon after he had completed the fiftieth year of his reign. His health had for some time previously been failing; but the death of his youngest daughter, the Princess Amelia, so affect-

ed him that he lost his reasoning faculties and continued during the remainder of his life in strict retirement. The Prince of Wales, who afterwards ascended the throne as George the Fourth, was appointed Regent of the United Kingdom during his father's illness. The reign of George the Third really ends at this period, although it continued nominally for several years longer: it was the longest and the most interesting reign in English history, and it was a happy occurrence that a king so much loved and respected as George the Third was seated on the throne of England during that eventful period. The character of the Prince Regent was a marked contrast to that of his father. He was an utter profligate, and so abandoned a prince had not reigned over the people of England since the time of Charles the Second.

The appointment of a Regent.

In 1812 war was declared against England by the United States of America. This contest is of insignificant importance, in comparison with the extensive warfare on the continent of Europe. It consisted chiefly in naval actions between single vessels.

War with the United States.

During the same year an enormous French army under Napoleon invaded Russia, and was obliged to retreat in a season of severe cold under circumstances of appalling distress. The successful resistance of the Russians encouraged several na-

Grand alliance against Napoleon.

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A. D. 1813. tions to resist the hitherto victorious Emperor; and England, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and other countries entered into alliance against him. The coalition was successful, and, the allies entering Paris in triumph, Louis the Eighteenth was placed on the throne of France, and Napoleon was banished to Elba, a small island near the western coast of Italy, where he was permitted to retain a few soldiers of his imperial guard, but was deprived of all power.

His defeat and banishment. A. D. 1814.

The return of Napoleon.

Napoleon had remained in Elba a few months only, when he conceived a daring scheme for gaining his forfeited authority. Landing on the coast of France with his few faithful followers, he was every where received by the soldiers with enthusiasm. Louis the Eighteenth again fled from Paris, and Napoleon again became the ruler of France and the terror of Europe. Another league against him was again formed between the principal states of Europe, and the forces of England were placed under the command of her well-tried commander, the Duke of Wellington. They were assembled in Belgium, and a Prussian army under Marshal Blucher was near at hand. Napoleon, anxious to engage the Prussians and English before their allies could come to their aid, hastened into Belgium, and attacked the Prussians at Ligny. They were obliged to retreat, and the Duke of Wellington, who had also to withstand the advance of the French

at Quatre Bras on the same day, was consequently compelled to retire. Taking up a position, however, near the neighbouring village of Waterloo, the Duke patiently awaited the attack of the whole French army.

The battle of Waterloo. June 18th.

On the morning of the following day, the French began the engagement. The British infantry, far inferior to their assailants in number, withstood charge after charge from the best of Napoleon's troops. The hours passed slowly away. Wellington was waiting for the Prussians. The close ranks of the English remained unbroken except for the gaps occasioned by the falling of the dead. At length, as evening drew near, the advanced guard of the Prussians came in sight. A final effort made by Napoleon was steadily repulsed; and, at a word from Wellington, the patient, heroic men who had hitherto remained firm as rocks during the impetuous charges of the French, charged in their turn and put the enemy to flight.

The exile of Napoleon.

Napoleon fled to Paris after the battle of Waterloo: but he did not remain there long. Hastening to the sea coast, he attempted to embark for America, but, finding it impossible to elude the English vessels, he surrendered to the Captain of the Bellerophon, an English ship of war, and was conveyed to England, where, as he said, he claimed the hospitality of the British people, the most

CHAP. XXIV. A. D. 1815. powerful, constant, and generous of his enemies. He was afterwards detained in an easy captivity at St. Helena, a lonely island in the South Atlantic Ocean, where he ended his days in exile.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES.

FROM A. D. 1816 TO A. D. 1856.

The bombardment of Algiers—Death of the Princess Charlotte—Death of George the Third—Progress of civilisation—Suppression of the slave trade—Accession of George the Fourth—Thistlewood's conspiracy—Trial of the queen—Repeal of the Test Act—The Roman Catholic Relief Bill—Accession of William the Fourth—His character—The Reform Bill—Slavery abolished in the colonies—Accession of Queen Victoria—Her coronation and marriage—Disturbances in Canada—War in Syria—War in China—Repeal of the Corn Laws—Famine in Ireland—Revolutions on the Continent—April 10*th* 1848*—The Great Exhibition—The war with Russia—The battle of the Alma—The siege of Sebastopol—The battle of Inkerman—The Peace of Paris—Conclusion.*

DURING the year which succeeded the general peace, an attack was made upon Algiers by the British fleet in the Mediterranean. Satisfaction

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had been demanded from the Barbary states on the northern coast of Africa, on account of the frequent piracies which had occured in that sea, and the slavery to which those who had been captured by the pirates had been subjected. The states of Tunis and Tripoli immediately abandoned those practices and responded to the demand of the English Government: but the Dey of Algiers, trusting to the strength of his capital and hoping that it would be able to withstand a naval attack, refused to yield up his prisoners or to restrain the pirates. Algiers was consequently bombarded by the fleet under Lord Exmouth, and its fortifications destroyed. The objects of this attack were fully attained; all the Christian slaves in Algiers were released, and the exertions of the British seamen in maintaining the cause of the oppressed were perfectly successful.

Death of the Princess Charlotte.

In the following year the whole nation were deeply grieved at the death of the Princess Charlotte, the only daughter of the Prince Regent. She had lately married Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg, the present king of the Belgians, and she died in giving birth to a dead son.

The death of George the Third.

In 1820 sorrow, as deep and sincere, was again experienced. In that year George the Third died, full of years and full of honour. Although he had for some time past lived in retirement, the mournful feeling occasioned by his

death was universal: all classes showed their sorrow at his loss, and grieved for him as for a personal friend.

Progress of civilisation.

'During the long period of George the Third's reign, the state of society and of civilisation was much improved. More attention than formerly was paid to the condition of the poor and kindlier feelings were consequently engendered between them and the higher classes of society; the severity of the criminal law was diminished; the condition of prisoners was ameliorated; and various inventions for the benefit of the nation and for the good of mankind were first brought into general use. The names of John Howard and of Mrs. Fry ought to be particularly mentioned, as preeminent in their unselfish exertions for the good of their fellow-countrymen.

Suppression of the slave trade.

But works of benevolence were not confined to England alone: other nations felt the benefit of their labours, and especially those unhappy persons who had been taken from their homes in Western Africa as slaves, and employed in the plantations of the West Indies and America. Several good men, feeling how disgraceful it was that England, a nation of freemen, should countenance so iniquitous a traffic as the slave trade in any of her colonies, attempted to obtain a change in the laws upon the subject. Wilberforce, Clarkson, and Granville Sharp are the honoured names of the chief supporters of those noble

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endeavours. By their exertions a bill was passed through the Houses of Parliament in 1807, ordaining that no British subject could lawfully carry on a trade in slaves. England has rarely shown a more glorious example to the other nations of the earth.

Accession of George the Fourth.

The accession of George the Fourth to the throne was more nominal than real: he had so long exercised the functions of royalty, that change of title occasioned no change of power. Soon after his accession a wild scheme was discovered for assassinating the king's ministers. The plot was detected in time; and Thistlewood, the leader of the conspirators, and a few others who had been associated with him, were executed. A disgraceful trial took place at this time. The queen had for many years been separated from her husband, and upon her attempting to regain her forfeited position as queen of England, she was subjected to a humiliating trial before the House of Lords, in which she was virtually acquitted.

Repeal of the Test Act.

The principal measure of George the Fourth's reign was the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. It will be remembered that an act of Parliament called the Test Act was passed in the reign of Charles the Second, requiring every one who might be appointed to fill any public office to conform to the usages of the English Church. The Test Act was at this time repealed, and all Protestant Dissenters were pronounced eligible for any appointment under the crown.

The Roman Catholic Relief Bill. April 13th.

This concession was felt to be a grievance by the Roman Catholics, who were still disqualified for holding office or for sitting in Parliament. This was especially felt in Ireland where most persons belong to that faith, and much excitement was occasioned by the discussion of the subject. At length in the spring of 1829, a bill was carried, by which the disabilities were taken away from the Roman Catholics, and they were enabled to enter Parliament. The general feeling throughout the country was, that no one ought to be debarred from any office to which his abilities entitle him on account of his religion.

Accession of William the Fourth.

George the Fourth died in the following year, unregretted by his subjects; and was succeeded by his next brother, the Duke of Clarence, who ascended the throne as William the Fourth. The new sovereign was a great contrast to his immediate predecessor. George the Fourth was extremely courteous in manner, though cold and heartless: William the Fourth was rough and quick, having served for some time as an officer in the English navy, and having acquired the bluffness which generally distinguishes English sailors, but his heart was warm and his affections were sound.

The Reform Bill. June 7th 1832.

Two measures of great importance were passed through Parliament in the reign of William the Fourth. The first was a bill for promoting reform in the House of Commons. Many of the

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towns which returned members to Parliament had fallen from the importance that they had formerly possessed, while at the same time several places which had lately increased in wealth, and size, and population, were still unrepresented. For these reasons the country was represented in Parliament in an unequal manner, and consequently great dissatisfaction was felt. After a struggle of long duration and great popular excitement, a bill was carried through both Houses, whereby several places which formerly returned members to sit in the House of Commons were debarred from this privilege; other towns were adequately represented; and the number of persons who voted at the election of members of Parliament was enlarged. This measure was in itself just and proper, and the passing it was a proof that the English people in general, although deeply attached to the ancient institutions of their country, are desirous of effecting changes whenever they are absolutely required.

Slavery abolished in the colonies.

The second important measure of William the Fourth's reign was the abolition of slavery in the colonies. The slave trade had been justly forbidden: but the planters in the English islands of the West Indies were still in the possession of slaves. The last remnant of this disgraceful practice was now abolished. Every slave in the English colonies was declared to be as free as he would have been

had he set foot on English ground, for the moment he touches that, he becomes free. By this noble measure, which exhibits in a brilliant manner the justice and the unselfishness that frequently characterise the English people, 700,000 slaves were liberated.

Accsesion of Queen Victoria.

William the Fourth died in 1837, and was succeeded by his niece Victoria, our beloved queen. She was very young when she ascended the throne, and the hearts of her subjects were gladdened by the bright promise of peace and happiness with which her reign began. She was crowned on the 28th of June 1838: and on the 10th of February 1840, she was married to her cousin Albert, the present Prince Consort, to whom she was attached by feelings of affectionate love.

Disturbances in Canada.

Soon after the accession of Queen Victoria, the attention of her ministers was directed towards the affairs of Canada, where a spirit of restlessness and discontent had lately prevailed. An insurrection, supported only by the riotous and disaffected, took place: but the rebels being disappointed of obtaining assistance from the United States of America, it was speedily suppressed.

War in Syria.

Hostilities were soon afterwards undertaken in Syria and in China. Mahomed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, had thrown off the allegiance of the Sultan, under whom he had nominally ruled hitherto, and had taken possession of Syria.

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The English Government thought it right to interfere between the Pasha and the Sultan, and compelled the Egyptians to evacuate Syria, to restore the Turkish fleet which had sided with him, and to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Sultan. Beyrout and Sidon were captured, and Acre bombarded by the English fleet under Commodore Napier, by the orders of the admiral who commanded.

War in China.

In China, the war was undertaken on account of insults offered to English merchants. Canton was blockaded, and an army under the command of Sir Hugh Gough advanced as far as Nankin, the second city in the Chinese Empire, and peace was then concluded with the Chinese Emperor. Canton was formerly the only port in which foreigners were admitted : four other ports were by this treaty opened for the purposes of commerce ; the island of Hong Kong at the mouth of the Canton river was ceded to the English ; and a large sum was paid by the Chinese for the expenses of the war.

Repeal of the Corn Laws.

In the year 1846 a change was made in the laws regarding the admission of corn into the United Kingdom. A heavy duty had formerly been imposed upon all corn which was imported from foreign countries; but this tax was now repealed, and free trade was established with all the world. Sir Robert Peel, the prime minister, who had hitherto opposed this measure, but who was

now convinced of its necessity, carried the bill through the House of Commons. The subject caused great agitation and excitement among all classes; it was bitterly opposed by the Tories: but it has since proved beneficial to the country. England has been as prosperous and powerful since the introduction of this bill as she was before.

Famine in Ireland.

During the following year great distress was experienced by the poorer classes in Ireland and Scotland, owing to a failure of the crops. In England also the distress was very great: but the famine was felt most in Ireland, where the general food consisted of potatoes, as the crops of that season were almost all blighted. The liberality and patriotism of Englishmen were gloriously displayed in this time of trouble: large sums of money were collected for the sufferers, and many of the rich gave up their luxuries, and aided to the utmost of their power in alleviating the miseries of the poor.

April 10th 1848.

The year 1848 was a year of change upon the continent of Europe. A revolution took place in Paris; Louis Philippe, the king of the French, was dethroned and sought a place of refuge in England; changes and revolutions occurred in other places; and England alone remained secure amidst the numerous disturbances that prevailed. The Chartists, an insignificant party of discontented and riotous men, chiefly composed of the lower classes, had lately increased in num-

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bers. They have received this name from an extravagant charter which they desire to become the law of the land: but the party does not number among its adherents any person of eminent character, and on the 10th of April 1848 it was proved to be contrary to the feelings and desires of the people. On that day the Chartists assembled near London, but in smaller numbers than had been previously expected, and then signified their intention of proceeding in procession through the streets of the capital, and of presenting a petition to Parliament regarding the promulgation of their charter. The Government determined that they should not be allowed to enter London, lest they should occasion disturbances in the streets; that their petition should be received in a quiet, unostentatious manner; and that they should be prevented by force from carrying their wishes into effect, if they still desired to persevere in their former intention. The preservation of peace in the metropolis was entrusted to the policemen, the gentlemen, and the middle classes, who were interested in preserving tranquillity. Thousands were sworn in as special constables for the time being, and paraded the streets night and day. The houses near the bridges where the Chartists were expected to cross the river were filled with soldiers who were to be employed in case of need: but not a single red coat was seen in the streets. The peace of the capital was not,

however, disturbed. The Chartists dispersed quietly, and the cause of loyalty and order signally prevailed in London, when Paris, Vienna, and Berlin were the scenes of outrage and strife.

The Great Exhibition.

In 1851, a scheme which owed its origin to the taste and zeal of Prince Albert was carried into effect. A great exhibition was held in Hyde Park, London, of the manufactures, sculpture, machinery, and other productions of industry from all the nations of the earth. Thousands visited it from other countries, and London was for several weeks crowded with foreigners. This meeting was a happy illustration of the concord which should prevail among all nations, and of that tranquillity which we desire to see triumphant throughout the world.

The war with Russia.

But the long peace which had lately prevailed in Europe was soon to be broken. The Czar of Russia, whose large empire had, during the last fifty years, increased in strength, extent, and importance, had lately entertained designs against the country of Turkey; and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of England and France, had sent an army to occupy the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, which form the northern portion of the Turkish empire. The Turks defeated the Russians in several bloody battles on the Danube: but it was feared that, the enormous military strength of Russia being employed against her weaker neighbour,

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Turkey would eventually succumb and become merely a helpless province of Russia. England and France consequently entered into alliance for the purpose of opposing the ambition of the Russian Emperor, and of preserving the integrity of the Turkish empire. The king of Sardinia subsequently joined the alliance, while the king of Prussia and the emperor of Austria remained neutral.

Battle of the Alma. Septr. 20th.

The allied French and English armies first landed on the Turkish coasts at Gallipoli, to the south of Constantinople: they afterwards proceeded to Varna, where their presence tended to encourage the Turks, and effectually prevented a Russian army from attempting to penetrate to the capital. It was there arranged that a landing should be effected in the Crimea and an attack made upon Sebastopol, the largest and most important of the Russian ports. The troops landed with scarcely any opposition: but as they advanced towards Sebastopol, they met the Russian army strongly posted on the steep banks of the river Alma, where a fierce and decisive battle took place. The Russians were defeated by the gallantry of the English and French, who fought side by side as bravely against their common enemy, as they had formerly fought against each other.

The siege of Sebastopol.

Instead of advancing straight towards the northern side of Sebastopol, a flank march was

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made across the country to the southern side, which was supposed not to be so strongly fortified as the other. The harbour of Balaclava was taken, and the allied armies encamped before the city. The siege of Sebastopol is the most famous siege of modern times. The town was defended by enormous forts on the north and west; and on the south, General Todtleben, a Russian Engineer, constructed numerous new fortifications of surpassing strength in a very short space of time. The siege lasted eleven months. The Russians exhibited great skill and courage in defence: but the persevering exertions of the allies were ultimately successful; neither the bitter cold of the Crimean winter, nor the mortality in their ranks, nor the length of the siege daunted them: the southern portion of Sebastopol, which had so long been the scene of strife, was captured, and the Russians retreated to the northern forts along a bridge of boats hastily constructed across the arm of the sea on which Sebastopol is built.

The battle of Balaclava. Octr. 25th.

During the siege three battles occurred, in all of which the Russians were the aggressors. The first was fought near Balaclava, and during it one of the most memorable events of the campaign took place. Owing to the misapprehension of an order, six hundred English horsemen charged the Russian army in position. This act of devotion was worse than useless. The Russian artillery-men were

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driven from their guns; but it was absolutely impossible to keep them with so few men, and, with diminished numbers but with dauntless hearts, the brave soldiers were obliged to return. Though the charge at Balaclava was a blunder in a military point of view it was one of the most splendid incidents in the war.

The battle of Inkerman. Nov. 5th.

On the 5th of November the Russians attempted to overpower the English army by bringing overwhelming numbers against it. The battle of Inkerman was, it is said, a thorough soldiers' battle. The mist was so dense that the contending parties could scarcely be seen. There were no manœuvres and no generalship; but hard straight forward fighting. 7000 Englishmen held five times their number at bay, until supported by their French allies with whom they drove the enemy back into the town again.

The engagement at Traktir Bridge.

The third battle which we mentioned was fought at Traktir Bridge on the river Tchernaya: but the English were scarcely engaged in it, the French and Sardinians alone being opposed to the Russians in that action.

Naval operations in the Baltic.

During the campaign in the Crimea, an allied fleet blockaded the Russian ports in the Baltic, but the fortifications were too strong for a naval force alone to attack them. In the month of April 1856, peace was concluded between the contending powers at Paris: the Russian Emperor

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The Peace of Paris.

Alexander, who had ascended the throne on the death of his father, resigned the claims which the Russians had asserted over the Principalities, and yielded to the terms of the allies. The eventful war which had for so many months disturbed the tranquillity of Europe was at an end.

Conclusion of the history.

We conclude our history with the peace of Paris. At that time the powers and resources of the English nation, instead of being exhausted by the war, were more abundant and effective than they were before it began. It was better prepared to continue the war than either its opponent or ally. In war, as well as in peace, the power of England is a progressive power. Our narrative commenced at a period when the inhabitants of Britain were among the most degraded nations of the earth: the contrast between the state of the country then and its condition now, is very remarkable, for the history of England is a history of progress. In each generation there has been a marked improvement over the preceding one. In manners, in customs, in art, in literature, but above all, in religion, there has been a change for the better.

The causes of England's prosperity.

One of the chief reasons for the well-being of the English people is to be found in the admirable manner in which the various classes of society are blended, so that the lines that separate them are scarcely discernible. There is no caste in

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England, and consequently none of the hinderances to improvement which caste entails: there is no infatuated adherence to custom, and consequently none of the stagnation which custom induces. To these reasons, and to the perseverance and energy of her people, England owes her high position in the world: but they would have been of no avail, unless it had been for the favour of Him who is the Sovereign Lord of all, and from whom alone the people of England have received the blessings they enjoy.

THE END.

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ERRATA.

Page 73 line 1 for *and* read *land.*
— 106 — 20 for *countries* read *counties.*
— 144 — 1 for *file* read *pile,*
— 159 margin for 1450, read 1460.
— 161 line 10 for *countries* read *counties.*
— 207 margin for 1856 read 1556.
— 288 line 20 for *Oxford* read *Orford.*
— 295 margin for 1245 read 1745.